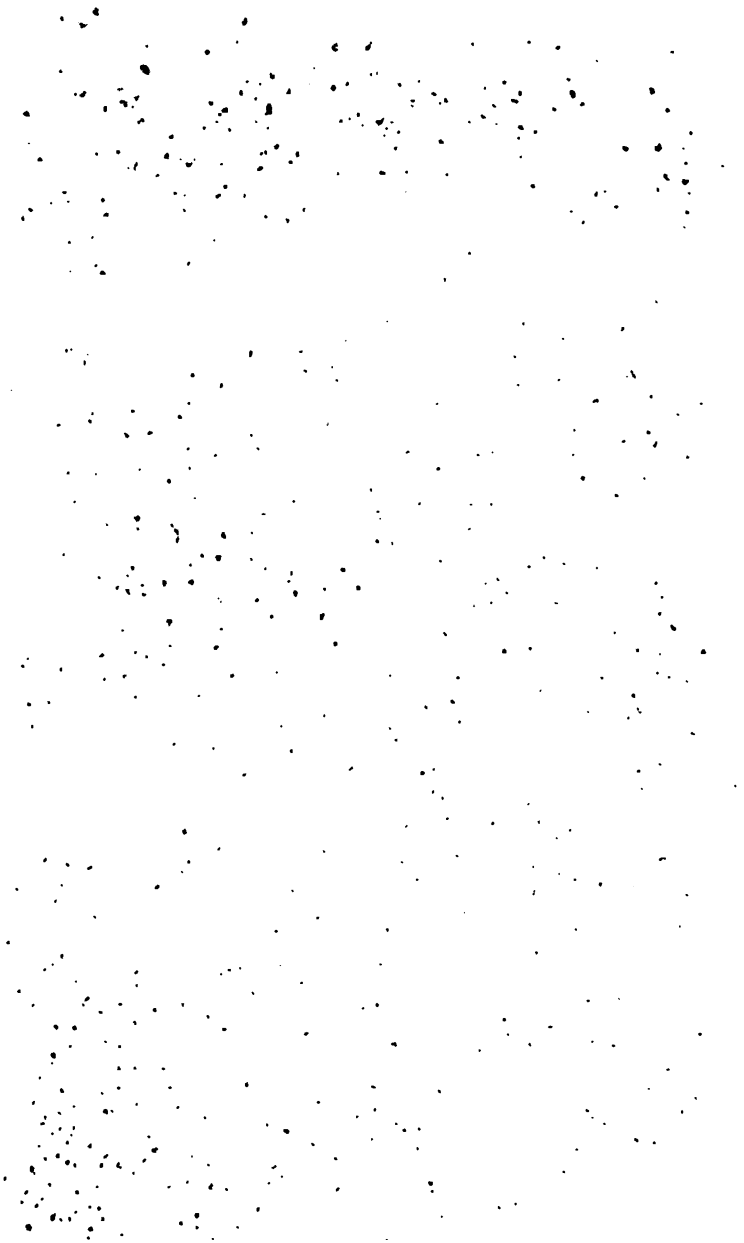
DOMESTIC PETS

BY

MRS LOUDON.



THE SPANIEL, POODLE, AND ITALIAN GREYHOUND.

DOMESTIC PETS:

THEIR

HABITS AND MANAGEMENT;

WITH

ILLUSTRATIVE ANECDOTES.

BY

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"THE LADY'S COUNTRY COMPANION,"
"GLIMPSES OF NATURE," ETC.

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PREFACE.

THE idea of writing a work on Domestic Pets was suggested to me several years ago, and it has haunted me ever since, though a variety of reasons have hitherto prevented the execution of the design. Now, however, that I chance to have a short interval of leisure, I have taken up the subject in earnest, and with my favourite dog lying at my feet, a cat purring on a sofa at my side, and two gold fish swimming merrily about in a vase before me, I sit down to write about the animals I am so fond of; and of which, fortunately for the interest of my book, thousands of other people are equally fond as myself.

The four-footed domestic pets I have written about at length in this little work, are dogs, cats, and squirrels; but I have also said a few words about rabbits, guinea pigs, and white mice. With regard to the feathered race, I have treated at some length on parrots and other talking birds; and canaries and other singing birds; and I have added a few words about doves and fancy pigeons. I have not forgotten gold fish; and I have slightly mentioned monkeys, though I think the latter so mischievous and disagreeable that they scarcely deserve to be called Domestic Pets.

J. W. L.

BAYSWATER,
Nov. 16th, 1850.

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CHAPTER I.

DOGS.

The Dog is unquestionably the noblest of all domestic pets, and he may be pre-eminently styled the friend of man; for, however different dogs may be in other respects, they are all alike in being faithful and affectionate to their masters. Always grateful and never treacherous, forgetful of himself, and loving even the hand that strikes him, watching his master's looks, and obeying his slightest sign, the dog affords a model we might do well to study; for we rarely find man, with all his superior faculties, practising those virtues which are considered only the ordinary qualities of the dog.

Though dogs differ so widely in their forms and habits, we can never for a moment doubt that they are all animals of the same genus: thus, without

knowing anything of natural history, we feel at first sight that a poodle, a King Charles's spaniel, and an Italian greyhound are all dogs; though, when we look at the difference in their forms, it is difficult for any one who has not studied the subject, to say in what the points of resemblance consist. A naturalist, however, will tell us that the dog is a vertebrated animal, because it has, proceeding from its skull, a back bone, the joints of which are called vertebræ; and he will add that the dog is placed in the class Mammalia, because the female suckles her young; in the tribe Unguiculata, because the feet are armed with nails; and in the order Digitigrades, because it walks principally on its toes; but the cat is also a vertebrated animal belonging to the class Mammalia, the tribe Unguiculata, and the order Digitigrades; and how is the cat to be distinguished from the dog? In answer to this question the naturalist will at once refer us to the claws, which a dog cannot draw into his foot, as is done by all animals of the cat kind. The jaws of the dog are also differently formed to those of the cat; there are two tubercular teeth in the upper jaw, and the eyes have not the same power of contraction when exposed to strong light. Of these peculiarities, the claws afford the most distinctive mark, as the retractile claws of the cat enable her to hold

by them in a manner that is quite impracticable by the dog; while, on the other hand, the greater strength of the jaws enables the dog to inflict a much more fearful wound when he bites, than can be done by a cat.

The wolf and the fox were included by Linnæus in the same genus as the dog; but the pupils of the eye of the wolf are oblique, and those of the fox upright and long, while those of the dog are circular.

There are more than a hundred different kinds of dogs, some that approach closely to the wolf, an animal very nearly allied to the dog in its anatomy; and others so mild and gentle in their manners, and so quick in understanding all that is said to them, that they seem almost like intellectual beings. It must be remarked, however, that though some dogs exhibit the lank and gaunt form, the lengthened limbs, and the long slender muzzle which characterize the wolf, they can always be distinguished from that animal by the position of the eyes, which in the wolf are always oblique, and give its countenance a sinister expression, very different from the open joyous look of the dog.

Some kinds of dogs cannot certainly be called domestic pets: as, for example, the blood-hound, the bull-dog, the mastiff, and the Newfoundland dog; but even these large and powerful animals

have the genuine characteristics of their race: affectionate and submissive to their master, they come crouching to his feet, watching his eyes, and wagging their tails with joy at the slightest notice. The bull-dog and the mastiff are fierce and sometimes ferocious to strangers: but no dogs are more obedient to their masters. The Newfoundland dog is naturally of a gentle temper; and, indeed, it has been mercifully provided, that generally the most powerful dogs are of the mildest tempers, while little dogs are frequently sharp and snappish in the extreme. Had the Newfoundland dog the vicious temper of the cur, it would be insupportable.

The bull-dog is, however, an exception to this rule, as it is very often surly; and it has been observed in many cases that flat-nosed dogs are more violent in temper than dogs with long muzzles, though they have generally more intellect. When a dog's forehead is round without any depression, it is said to be a proof of good temper, and when there is a mark in the centre, it indicates intellectual power. There is, no doubt, a great difference in dogs in this respect, as some dogs are so stupid that they cannot be taught anything, while others are so clever that they seem almost like reasonable beings.

Nearly all dogs are gifted with a great acuteness

of scent, and when in doubt respecting anything, they seem to trust to their scent sooner than to their sight. If a dog loses his master, he may be watched tracing his footsteps, by going over the same ground, step by step, that his master had previously trodden.

The small hounds called beagles, have a very curious effect when seen at a distance hunting a hare, as their speed is so much less than that of the animal they pursue, that they are often left at a considerable distance behind, and yet they will be observed to go over exactly the same ground as that trodden by the hare, turning wherever she turned, even sometimes back again, but never stopping or hesitating, and continuing the chase till in the end their victim is taken.

There is as great a diversity in the ears of dogs as in their noses: some ears are small, sharply pointed, and erect, and others are long and drooping; so much so, indeed, that in some of the King Charles's breed, they actually sweep the ground.

Dogs not only bark, but occasionally they utter different sounds, as if they endeavoured to express their wishes. When they bark, it is generally that they are frightened, and they are calling for their protectors to assist them. Hence it is, that little dogs generally bark more violently and are less

easily pacified than large ones; and, as a proof that dogs only bark to call for assistance, it has been observed that they almost always cease barking at a stranger the moment any one belonging to them appears. The barking of the dog, indeed, as Mr. Couch observes in his very interesting work called *Illustrations of Instinct*, "is a language learned in domestication. A really wild dog does not bark but howl, and in countries where the dog returns to a savage condition, he forgets to bark, and learns again to howl;" and this is the more remarkable, as the wolf, the fox, and the jackal, which are all very nearly allied to the dog, bark in a wild state. It is said that, in addition to their bark, dogs have some mode of communicating their wishes to each other with which we are unacquainted; and it is a well-known fact, that where a little dog and a large dog have lived together, if the little dog should be attacked and worried by a stranger, he will go home and fetch the dog he lives with to help him to beat his enemy, and that this is done without the little dog barking or uttering any sound by which he might be supposed to acquaint his friend with what had befallen him. The dogs of New Orleans are said to assemble together when they wish to cross the Mississippi, and to bark on the river's bank to attract the alligators, and then, when the alligators are drawn all together

to one spot, the dogs, taking advantage of the unwieldy slowness of their enemies, "set off at full speed, and plunging into the water higher up the stream, cross it with impunity."

Dogs, says a clever writer on the subject, appear to learn from the general manners of those they associate with. Dogs kept by the vicious, become vicious in their habits; while, on the other hand, dogs who live with persons of mild manners and regular habits are always mild in character.

It is remarkable that, though the dog is so universally allowed to be the friend and companion of man, its name should give rise to so many terms of reproach, such as "dog," "puppy," "dog's trick," "to lead the life of a dog," "to be used like a dog," &c.; but this is said to have originated in the East, where the dog was held in abhorrence as the common scavenger of the streets.

It is generally said that one of the clearest marks which distinguish the reason of man from the instinct of animals, is that the latter have no power of will, and cannot do anything different from other animals of the same species. Instances, however, have been recorded in which dogs appear to show a power of choosing, judging, and acting for themselves. There is a dog at Derby who often visits Matlock by the railway, going by one train, and

returning by another. He never goes farther than Matlock baths, and always returns the same night to Derby, which is his home.

In the *Magazine of Natural History* a story is told of a Setter dog, who forced his way into an omnibus in the Edgeware Road, "much against the consent of the conductor and passengers, as the dog did not belong to either, and who used every means to entice him out, which he constantly resisted in the most surly manner, so much so, that they were in danger of being bitten if they attempted to force him out. These attempts were repeated every time the omnibus stopped, but always without success, till they arrived at the Eagle in the City Road," when, the moment the door was opened, the dog jumped out, and walked off to a neighbouring street which it was afterwards discovered was his home.

Another correspondent in the same *Magazine* mentions a curious circumstance which happened in Scotland, and which he was witness to. In many of the remote parts of the country, the people are in the habit of taking their dogs with them to church; and in the place of worship he usually went to, some dogs having been fighting and disturbing the service, it was agreed by the parishioners that they should confine their canine favourites at

home, and not allow them to come to church. "This did very well for the first Sunday or so; but the dogs, not at all relishing to be locked up on a day when they were wont to enjoy themselves, were never to be found on the Sunday mornings to be tied up; they, by some instinct which I cannot explain, knew the Sunday as well as their masters, and set off before them, whither they had been in the habit of going on that day. It was now evident to the members of the congregation that this plan would not do, and another scheme was laid before them, which was to erect a house close to the church, in which dogs might be confined during divine service. This was adopted, and a kennel was accordingly erected, in which the dogs were imprisoned; but the animals being more accustomed to freedom than to confinement, took very ill with the restraint put upon their liberty, and set up a most dreadful howling, to the great annoyance of the people in the church. They, however, persevered in confining them for a considerable time, thinking the animals would get accustomed to their incarceration; but in this they were mistaken; for, instead of the howling diminishing, it got worse and worse, till at last it was found necessary to allow the dogs to return to their old habits."

A somewhat similar instance occurred within my

own knowledge. A gentleman residing in the pretty village of Powick in Worcestershire, had been in the habit of always taking his dog to church with him, but after having done this for several years, the master became so ill, that he could not go to church. Notwithstanding this, the dog continued every Sunday when he heard the bells tolling, to go to the church and walk up to his master's pew, the door of which was generally opened for him by some one who knew his habits. When this was done, the dog would walk into the pew, and lie down, under the seat, remaining perfectly quiet till the service was ended, when he would walk out of the church, and return to his own home. When the pew door was not opened for him, he used to lie down in the aisle as close to the pew as he could, always remaining perfectly quiet till he saw the congregation begin to disperse, when he also went home.

These stories may be considered as illustrations of the force of habit in dogs, but many other circumstances have been observed which show a variety of character and various feelings in the canine race. Dogs decidedly feel a sense of shame. I know perfectly well when my little dog Fairy has done anything wrong, by his guilty look ; and almost all my readers who have kept dogs, can, I doubt not,

recall instances of similar feelings in their respective favourites. Dogs are also exceedingly sensitive of jealousy, and many may be persuaded to eat almost anything by being told that the cat will have it if they do not take it; and a dog who had a rival called York, used to growl whenever he heard the name of that city mentioned by any one. In many cases dogs seem to understand perfectly what is said to them; thus, if I say that I am going to take a walk, and intend to take Fairy with me, my little dog jumps up, and begins to wag his tail, though I have not moved from my own seat; but if, on the contrary, even when I am putting on my bonnet, I tell Fairy that he cannot go with me, his tail is tucked in, his head hangs down, and he slinks away to his mat.

In these particulars I believe almost all dogs are alike, but others show marks of what may be called superior intelligence, and sometimes almost of a reasoning faculty. In Mr. Couch's *Illustrations of Instinct*, a story is told of a dog who was fond of sheep-killing, but who "would pass by his own master's flock, of which it was the guardian, and go a mile or two away, to gratify its craving by slaughtering a lamb in the field of a stranger." This was a very curious circumstance, and seems to imply not only an extraordinary degree of in-

telligence, but wonderful self-command on the part of the dog.

Another story is told, in the same work, of a Spanish dog in the West Indies, who was used by the Spaniards to bring back the runaway Indians. "He would select, among two hundred Indians, one who had escaped from the Christians, or who should have been pointed out to him, and would seize him by the arm, and make him come back with him to the camp, or wherever the Christians might be; and if he attempted to resist, or would not come, he tore him to pieces, and did other things which were very remarkable, and worth recording. At midnight, if a prisoner got loose, and were a league distant, it was but to say 'the Indian is gone!' or, 'fetch him!' and away Bezerillo went upon the scent, and brought him back. The tame Indians he knew as well as a man could know them, and never did them hurt; and, among many tame ones, he could distinguish one wild one: it seemed as if he had the judgment and intelligence of a man, and that not of a foolish one. Salazar had one day taken an old Indian woman, among other prisoners, after a defeat of the natives, and for no assigned or assignable reason, but in mere wantonness of cruelty, he determined to set this dog upon the poor wretch.

But it was to be made a sport of, a spectacle for the Spaniards, or the Christians, as their contemporary historian and fellow Christian calls them, even while he is relating this story. Salazar gave the woman an old letter, and told her to go with it to the governor at Aymaco. The poor creature went her way joyfully, expecting to be set at liberty when she had performed her errand. The intent was merely to get her away from the rest, that the dog might have a fair field, and the beholders a full sight. Accordingly, when she had proceeded little farther than a stone's throw, Bezerillo was set at her. Hearing him come, the woman threw herself on the ground, and her simple faith in Salazar's intention, and in the animal's sagacity, saved her; for she held out the letter to the dog, and said, 'O, sir dog, sir dog! I am carrying a letter to the lord governor; don't hurt me, sir dog!' The dog seemed to understand her; and did understand her, in fact, sufficiently to know that she did not look upon herself as a condemned person, and that she implored his mercy; and he came up to her gently, and did her no harm."

In this case the dog probably judged from the manner of the woman, more than from her words; but there are several other cases on record in which dogs have appeared not only to understand what

has been said to them, but what they have heard other people saying.

Two or three years ago, I had just arrived, with my daughter, at a friend's house in the south of France, and as we ascended the stairs, a little dog flew out of one of the rooms, and began caressing us; this appeared very strange, as we were quite sure the dog had never seen us before; but my friend explained the mystery. "It is an English dog," said she, "and when she hears any one speaking English, she always comes and caresses them like old friends."

Another case was related to me. A dog named Hector, had done something wrong, and his master said to a friend, "I am afraid I must have Hector shot to-morrow." Hector was lying apparently asleep, before the fire, but he looked up at his master with a reproachful expression, when he heard his own name mentioned, and then walked out of the room, into which he never returned. Indeed, his master never saw him again, and never could learn any tidings of him.

Dogs occasionally perform duties that do not properly belong to them; a curious instance of which is given in the anecdote told by Sir Robert Kerr Porter of a Persian greyhound. When Sir Robert was travelling in Persia, his "horsekeeper allowed

a fine spirited animal he was leading, to break away. The horse set off at speed up the hills; and, from the darkness of the night, and the few people I could spare to pursue, I at first despaired of his recovery. But the dog, on the instant he perceived the animal loose, headed him at every turn; and, at length, after a long run, succeeded in catching the end of the halter, and retaining it in his mouth; holding it firm, while the superior strength of the horse dragged him onward; and then, pulling him in his turn, endeavoured to arrest the fugitive's pace during his bounds and sudden freaks; which effort of the dog so far impeded the animal's flight as, at last, to allow one of my servants to seize him."

A remarkable instance of the manner in which dogs recognise their masters by the sense of smell was related in all the French journals in March, 1842. This was the story of Madame Miollet, the wife of a sergeant attached to the African army. She had heard that her husband was ill at the hospital in Algiers, and she left her own home in France to go to nurse him. When she arrived, she was shown into a vast room, in which there were more than a hundred wounded persons huddled together. These poor wretches were so disfigured by their wounds, so emaciated by the

troubles they had undergone, that the poor woman looked from one to the other in despair, without being able to recognise her husband. While she was in great distress, she suddenly saw a little dog which she had brought with her jump upon one of the beds and begin caressing a wounded man who lay there. She followed and recognised her husband, and it is pleasing to know that the poor man finally recovered, principally owing to the tender cares of his wife, who would not have been permitted to remain many minutes more in the hospital if her husband had not been so opportunely recognised by his faithful dog.

Many dogs appear to have an ear for music; and a tale is told of a dog in a garrison town in France who went every morning to the parade, and every evening to the opera. In Rome there was a dog so exceedingly fond of music, and who attended so constantly whenever good music was performed, that he received the name of "il cane harmónico." Another dog, named Capucin, had been taught by his master, a German musician, to sound several musical notes, and if he was ever out of tune, and his master told him he was too high or too low, he would modulate his voice accordingly. The musical dog of Rome reminds me of the stories I have heard of regimental dogs, who attach themselves to par-

ticular regiments. There were several of these dogs in the French army in the time of Napoleon; and each remained with the regiment he had chosen through the whole of the campaign to Moscow, and the disastrous retreat.

When the frigate of "La belle Poule" was sent to St. Helena for the remains of Napoleon, a dog belonging to one of the officers fell over board, and as he was observed for some time swimming after the frigate, the officers united in begging the captain to lie to in order to take the poor creature up. As, however, the Prince de Joinville was on board, and it was contrary to etiquette to stop the vessel without his express orders, and he unfortunately had retired to rest, nothing could be done; and the officers continued on deck watching the struggles of the poor dog, till at last one of them was so much distressed that he ventured into the prince's cabin. The prince instantly rose and ordered a boat to be lowered; and soon the deck of "La belle Poule" was crowded with officers with their night-glasses, and sailors carrying lights to and fro, and all looking eagerly at the sea, in the hope of discovering the head of the poor half-drowned dog. At length the dog was seen, and dragged on board the boat, and when he reached the deck of the frigate, the sailors gave three cheers of delight,

and the dog went from one to the other wagging his tail, and caressing his preservers as though he were quite aware of the deep interest he had excited.

It is singular that no book appears to have been written on the art of teaching dogs, though it is well known that many dogs have been taught to perform extraordinary tricks. It appears, however, that some dogs have a natural aptitude for learning, while others cannot be taught without great difficulty. This is probably the reason that no rules have been laid down for teaching, as the mode of doing so requires to be incessantly varied. I have been told by those who understand the subject, that the great art of teaching dogs is to be patient with them; not to frighten them by severity, but to teach them gradually one thing at a time; praising and caressing them when they have done right, and correcting them very slightly when they do wrong. Dogs are extremely sensitive to praise, and one of the most accomplished little dogs I ever saw, which was a beautiful little chestnut and white spaniel, had never been beaten at all, but merely taught by never being given biscuit, of which he was very fond, except when he had done his duty; and, to the credit of the canine race, I may say that the biscuit always appeared quite a secondary consideration, as Caprice (for

that was the little dog's name), when his mistress praised him, would frequently take a run or two round the garden, as though to give vent to his delight, before he returned to eat the biscuit which had been set aside as his reward; and if he saw his mistress preparing to take a walk, he would go out with her, and the biscuit would be forgotten altogether. This dog would stand upon his hind legs and dance, would shake hands, giving his right paw when he was desired to do so; he would also shut the door, pick up his mistress's ball of cotton, and bring it to her when she dropped it; hold a fan before his face, and do several other tricks which I do not now recollect.

Another very accomplished little dog was a poodle which had been taught to hide his face with a fan, and when a pack of cards was placed before him, would put his paw upon the queen of hearts, when asked to tell what any particular lady was like.

These tricks, though ingenious, were, however, nothing compared to the dogs of a Monsieur Léonard, which were in London some years since; and from a very interesting account of an interview with M. Léonard, given in Youatt's *Treatise on the Dog*, I extract the following:—

"Two fine dogs, of the Spanish breed, were introduced by M. Léonard, with the customary French

politesse, the largest by the name of Philax, the other as Brac (or spot); the former had been in training three, and the latter, two years. They were in vigorous health, and, having bowed very gracefully, seated themselves on the hearth-rug side by side. M. Léonard then gave a lively description of the means he had employed to develope the cerebral system in these animals; how, from having been fond of the chase, and ambitious of possessing the best-trained dogs, he had employed the usual course of training; how the conviction had been impressed on his mind, that by gentle usage, and steady perseverance in inducing the animal to repeat again and again what was required, not only would the dog be capable of performing that specific act, but that part of the brain which was brought into activity by the mental effort would become more largely developed, and hence a permanent increase of mental power be obtained.

"After this introduction, M. Léonard spoke to his dogs in French, in his usual tone, and ordered one of them to walk, the other to lie down, to run, to gallop, halt, crouch, &c., which they performed as promptly and correctly as the most docile children. Then he directed them to go through the usual exercises of the *manège*, which they per-

formed as well as the best trained ponies at Astley's. He next placed six cards of different colours on the floor, and, sitting with his back to the dogs, directed one to pick up the blue card, and the other the white, &c., varying his orders rapidly, and speaking in such a manner that it was impossible the dogs could have executed his commands if they had not a perfect knowledge of the words. For instance, M. Léonard said, 'Philax, take the red card and give it to Brac; and, Brac, take the white card and give it to Philax:' the dogs instantly did this, and exchanged cards with each other. He then said, 'Philax, put your card on the green, and Brac, put yours on the blue;' and this was instantly performed. Pieces of bread and meat were placed on the floor, with figured cards, and a variety of directions were given to the dogs, so as to put their intelligence and obedience to a severe test. They brought the meat, bread, or cards, as commanded, but did not attempt to eat or to touch it unless ordered. Philax was then ordered to bring a piece of meat and give it to Brac, and then Brac was told to give it back to Philax, who was to return it to its place. Philax was next told that he might bring a piece of bread and eat it; but, before he had time to swallow it, his master forbade him, and directed

him to show that he had not disobeyed, and the dog instantly protruded the crust between his lips.

"After many other performances, M. Léonard invited a gentleman to play a game of dominos with one of them. The younger and slighter dog then seated himself on a chair at the table, and the writer and M. Léonard seated themselves opposite. Six dominos were placed on their edges in the usual manner before the dog, and a like number before the writer. The dog having a double number, took one up in his mouth, and put it in the middle of the table; the writer placed a corresponding piece on one side; the dog immediately played another correctly, and so on until all the pieces were engaged. Other six dominos were then given to each, and the writer intentionally placed a wrong number. The dog looked surprised, stared very earnestly at the writer, growled, and finally barked angrily. Finding that no notice was taken of his remonstrances, he pushed away the wrong domino with his nose, and took up a suitable one from his own pieces, and placed it in its stead. The writer then played correctly; the dog followed, and won the game. Not the slightest intimation could have been given by M. Léonard to the dog. This mode of play must have been entirely the result of his own observation and

judgment. It should be added that the performances were strictly private. The owner of the dogs was a gentleman of independent fortune, and the instruction of his dogs had been taken up merely as a curious and an amusing investigation."

An interesting account of two poodle dogs is given in the *Magazine of Natural History*, and quoted by Mrs. Lee in her *Elements of Natural History*.

"Two poodle dogs from Milan, the elder named Fido, and the other called Bianco, were shown in Paris for their remarkable powers. Fido was a grave and serious dog, who walked with much solemnity round the circle assembled to see him, but Bianco was younger and somewhat giddy. A word was given to Fido from the Greek, Latin, Italian, French, or English languages, and selected from a book where fifty words in each tongue were inscribed, which altogether made 300 combinations. He selected from the letters of the alphabet those which composed the given word, and laid them in order at the feet of his master. On one occasion the word heaven was told him, and he quickly placed the letters till he came to the second *e*, when, after vainly searching for the letter in his alphabet, he took it from the first syllable, and inserted it in the second. He went through the

first four rules of arithmetic in the same way with extraordinary celerity, and arranged the double cyphers in the same way as the double vowel in heaven. Bianco, however, although so giddy, was quicker than Fido, and when the latter made a mistake, was called in to rectify it, but as quickly dismissed, as he was wont to pull his companion's ears, to come and play with him. One day Fido spelt the word Jupiter with a *b*, but the younger *savant* being summoned to correct the error, he carefully contemplated the word, and, pushing out the *b*, replaced it with a *p*. A lady held her repeating watch to the ear of Fido, and made it strike eight hours and three quarters; Fido immediately selected an 8, and then a 6 for the three quarters: the company present, and the master, insisted upon his error, and he again looked among his cyphers, but, being unable to rectify it, he coolly sat himself down in the middle, and looked at the spectators; the watch was again sounded, and it was ascertained that it struck two for every quarter, which quite exonerated Fido. Both dogs would sit down to *écarté*, asking each other for, or refusing cards, with the most important and significant look, cutting at proper times, and never mistaking one card for another. Bianco occasionally won, and went to the cyphers to mark his points, and when

he was asked how many his adversary had gained, he took out an 0 with his teeth. They sometimes played at *écarté* with one of the company, when they evinced the same correctness, and seemed to know all the turns of the game."

I have already spoken of a dog that was taught to utter musical sounds; but a story is told in the *Histoire de l'Académie des Sciences de Paris*, of a dog which could pronounce twenty or thirty German words, or rather, which would repeat them after his master had said them. Leibnitz, in a letter to the Abbé de Saint Pierre, mentions a similar case, in which also the dog could only repeat the words after his master had said them. At Berlin in 1720, there was a dog exhibited who uttered sentences, and could ask for coffee, chocolate, &c., when he wanted anything. This dog could pronounce the name of Elizabeth distinctly.

Dogs have been known to perform in plays with wonderful sagacity; and there was one a few years since in Paris, in the part of a smuggler's dog, and who, having been tied up, contrived to get his head out of the collar, and, after giving his master a key that was required, to put his head back again into the collar so as to appear as if he had never stirred. The manner in which the dog did this, and the look of apparent innocence and sim-

plicity that he put on, when the person who had tied him up returned, was most exceedingly droll. In all cases where dogs perform, I am told that they are not fed till their work is over, and that if they have not performed well, they have no supper. Dogs may easily be taught to go to a shop and take a penny in their mouths for a roll or any other article of food; and I have, myself, many years ago, seen a dog in a shop in the Edgeware-road, waiting patiently till the woman, who was serving me, was ready to attend to him, and to give him a roll for the penny which he had kept carefully in his mouth till it was wanted. The woman told me that the dog used to come every day for his roll, and that he would not go out of the shop till it was given to him.

Dogs are generally classed in three divisions: the first have sharply pointed noses, and a very small development of brain. These dogs generally possess great speed, and considerable courage, but they are very deficient in intellect, and cannot be taught anything without the greatest labour. In this first division are included the dogs used in the chase, and the beautiful little Italian greyhounds. The second division contains dogs remarkable for their intelligence; and this division includes the spaniel, the Newfoundland dog, the

poodle, the shepherd's dog, and many others. The spaniels are said to be of Spanish origin, and that this is the derivation of their name. They are generally very sharp intelligent little dogs, and some of the varieties are remarkable for their beauty. The poodle is, however, generally considered to be the most intelligent of all dogs, and some of the stories that are related of him are almost incredible. It is said that he may be taught to ring the bell, open the door, and perform various other similar feats; and one of these dogs is said to have stolen and hidden the whip with which he had been corrected. Another very curious story of a dog of this kind is the following:—A poodle had been taken out for a walk in company with a pointer puppy, and they both plunged into the water; the puppy, who could not swim, was drowning, and the poodle went to his assistance, but finding him too heavy to drag out of the water, she pushed a piece of wood under his chin, by means of which he was prevented from drowning, till assistance was obtained.

The shepherd's dog belongs to this division, and many very interesting stories have been told of its sagacity. One of the most curious of these relates to the child of a shepherd on the Grampian mountains. This child (who was only three years old) had fallen down a kind of gulley, formed by

a mountain stream, and the father, having sought for it in vain, when he returned to his cottage, fatigued and disappointed, found that his faithful dog also was missing. The next day the search for the child was renewed without success; but on returning at night the shepherd was informed that the dog had been at home, and on receiving a piece of bread, given to him for his dinner, he had run off with it in his mouth without eating it. The idea that the dog had found the child having occurred to the shepherd, he watched for the dog to come the following day, and finding that when the bread was given to him, he ran off with it as before, he followed him. The dog led the way to a cataract at a short distance from the spot where the child had been last seen. "The banks of the cataract, almost joined at the top, yet separated by an abyss of immense depth, presented that appearance which so often astonishes and appals the travellers who frequent the Grampian mountains, and indicates that these stupendous chasms were not the silent work of time, but the sudden effect of some violent convulsion of the earth. Down one of these rugged and almost perpendicular descents the dog began, without hesitation, to make his way, and at last disappeared into a cave, the mouth of which was almost upon a level with the torrent.

The shepherd with difficulty followed; but on entering the cave, what were his emotions, when he beheld his child eating, with much satisfaction, the bread which the dog had just brought him; while the faithful animal stood by, eyeing his young charge with the utmost complacence!"

The various kinds of hounds, setters, and pointers, belong to this second division of the canine race; and their capability of learning is well known. What is called breaking-in pointers and setters, is, in fact, educating them; and it is really curious to see the manner in which they are taught everything that is requisite. From a very long and detailed account of the mode of breaking-in these dogs, that was published in the *Sporting Magazine*, some years ago, the following observations may be generally interesting, as they will apply to other dogs besides sporting ones. "Generally speaking, no dog is half so well broken as the one whose owner has taken the trouble of training him. The first and grand thing is to obtain the attachment of the dog, by frequently feeding and caressing him, and giving him little hours of liberty under his master's inspection; but, every now and then, inculcating a lesson of obedience, and teaching him that every gambol must be under the control of his master, by frequently checking him in the midst

of his play, with the order of 'Down, sir,' patting him when he is instantly obedient, and scolding or beating him, but not too severely, when he shows any reluctance to obey." The writer adds, that much kindness and gentleness are indispensably necessary; and if a young dog be too severely corrected, he can never be taught; also that the dog's temper must be studied, and a distinction made between timidity and stupidity. The writer concludes with the following advice:—"It will be seen by this, that no one should attempt to break-in a dog, who is not possessed of patience and perseverance; and great improvement must not be expected from the early lessons. The dog will often forget that which was inculcated upon him a few hours before; but perseverance and kindness will effect much: and the first lessons over, the dog, beginning to perceive a little what is meant, will cheerfully and joyfully do his duty. When there is much difficulty in teaching the dog his lesson, the fault lies as often with his master as with him; or, what most frequently happens, they are probably both in fault. Some dogs cannot be mastered without frequent correction; and others, when corrected, become either ferocious or sulky. In both cases, it is useless to attempt to teach them; and dogs of a more pliable temper should be sought for. The

majority of dogs, however, are exceedingly sagacious, and when they have once begun to learn, they can be taught almost anything."

The third division includes the more brutal and inferior kinds of dogs, such as the bull-dog and the terrier. These dogs have generally a small proportion of brain, and an immense development of jaws. They are often faithful to their masters, and occasionally they show considerable sagacity; but they can very seldom be taught anything.

Many opinions are entertained with regard to what food is best for dogs, and many people do not give them meat at all, from an idea that it is bad for them. This, however, must evidently be a mistake, for the teeth of the dog prove that he is naturally a carnivorous animal; and the enjoyment with which a dog gnaws a bone, proves that though he may have learnt to be satisfied with a vegetable diet, his natural instinct still remains. Some persons think milk bad for dogs; but my little dog, who is remarkably healthy, has milk regularly twice a day, like a cat. Fairy has never had the distemper, and I have been told that the milk diet has had some influence in preventing it. My little dog is very fond of nuts, and I believe many other dogs show a predilection for the same kind of food; but they are not good for them. Other dogs are fond of gooseberries, and will

walk into the garden when the fruit is ripe, and help themselves from the bushes. An instance is recorded in the *Magazine of Natural History*, of a dog kept in a stable, who always ate oats with the horses; and many other instances of the strange fancies of dogs with regard to food are related. On the continent, they always boil the meat intended for the dogs, and give it to them with the liquor thickened with barley meal or oatmeal. This makes the dogs large and very strong; and in Belgium, in particular, they are used in the fish carts instead of donkeys.

In kennels of hounds the dogs are generally fed with meat boiled into a kind of soup, which is thickened with oatmeal, till, when cold, it can be cut with a knife. The flesh should be cut very small, so that all the dogs may have an equal chance. When they are fed with milk, the quantity of flesh is diminished one half. Pet dogs are very frequently over-fed, and many are positively killed by the intended kindness of their mistresses. The dog is, naturally, rather of a spare habit of body, and it can go without food for four and twenty hours without the slightest inconvenience. In fact, it has been often observed, when dogs are regularly fed, that they will sometimes eat a great deal at one time, and then remain two or three days scarcely touching anything; but many ladies, when they see

a pet dog eat heartily one day, fancy that it will require as much every day: and if they find it refuse its food, they coax it to eat, till the poor dog becomes really quite unwell.

The two most important diseases of dogs, are the distemper and hydrophobia. The distemper is a very singular complaint, and it attacks dogs of all ages, though most of them have it when they are between six and twelve months old. When puppies younger than six months have it, they generally die; and it also often proves fatal to dogs about four years old. The disease appears to be epidemic. It generally occurs in spring or autumn, and spreads through an entire neighbourhood. French poodles almost always die, if they are attacked by it, and it is very frequently fatal to Newfoundland dogs. Small spaniels and pet dogs generally suffer from it severely; but curs, shepherds' dogs, and other hardy kinds seem to feel it very little. When a dog is attacked by the distemper, he appears at first to be suffering from a severe cold; he then loses his appetite, and appears dejected and unwilling to move; the eyes water; the dog will frequently shiver, and creep to the fire, and he has generally a peculiarly husky cough. The after progress of the disease is uncertain: sometimes fits come on, and at others the dog is affected with diarrhœa, and

dies from positive exhaustion. When fits begin, a veterinary surgeon should be sent for, as if they continue, the dog will probably die in a day or two. Sometimes an ulcer forms in one of the eyes, which appears to be destroyed; but it is a remarkable peculiarity in this disease, that if the dog recovers, the ulcer will heal, and the eye will appear not to have suffered the slightest injury. It is said that about one tenth part of young dogs die of the distemper; but if dogs have access to grass when they are first attacked, they will often recover without any other remedy being used. When they cannot get grass to serve as an emetic, Mr. Youatt tells us that common salt may be given, or a dose "of equal parts of calomel and tartar emetic. From half a grain to a grain and a half of each will constitute a dose." When this does not effect a cure, recourse should be had to a veterinary surgeon. Many dogs are supposed to be mad, who are in fact suffering from the distemper.

Hydrophobia is the most dreadful of all the diseases which attack the dog, and at the same time it is the one that is most difficult to ascertain the existence of, as other diseases are frequently mistaken for it: and the dread that most people justly have of mad dogs, occasions many animals to be destroyed if they show any symptoms which resem-

ble those of this disorder. It is generally supposed that a dog cannot be mad if he will take water; but in the early stage of the disease, dogs drink a great deal: it is only when the madness has actually commenced, that they show a horror at the sight of liquids; sometimes, indeed, they will continue to drink till they die. When a dog is first attacked, he evidently suffers from fever: he becomes restless, and yet languid; he is always changing his position, and yet does not seem inclined to move when he is called. As the disease increases, the dog starts convulsively in his sleep, and appears affected with delirium, as he frequently snaps at nothing. Sometimes the dog will utter a furious bark, and spring forward as though he would seize some imaginary object. This is generally a fatal symptom, and it is remarkable that it is sometimes observed in human beings affected by hydrophobia, in the early stage of the disease. Great care should be taken in not suffering a dog to lick the hands or the face when there is any scar upon them, as the disease has been frequently communicated by a dog licking a slight scratch. When a dog is affected with any disease in the summer season, children should not be allowed to play with him, or even to touch him, unless the nature of the disease is fully known.

One of the most extraordinary peculiarities of

hydrophobia, is the great length of time in which it may exist in the system in an inert state. Some years ago a child was bitten by a dog, which eight days afterwards showed symptoms of madness and died. The child also sickened and died of hydrophobia. In another case a lady was very slightly bitten by a favourite Italian greyhound, which afterwards showed symptoms of madness. The dog died on the 27th of December: on the 4th of February the lady was sitting at dinner, when she found a difficulty in swallowing her food; she attempted to take some wine, but could not drink it. The following day she sent for a medical man, who pronounced the case to be hydrophobia, and on the 7th of February she died.

Sometimes dogs retain their natural characters, and their affection for their masters, even when mad. A lady had a favourite dog, which she would insist upon nursing till she was dragged forcibly away from it, the dog being kept at bay with a poker. When she was gone, and the dog shut in a room, the noise it made was terrific, and it almost gnawed its way through the door. "At midnight the noise nearly ceased, and the door being partially opened, the dog was seen staggering and falling about, with every limb violently agitated. At the entreaty of the lady, a servant ventured in, but

the dog darted suddenly at him, and, exhausted by the effort, dropped down dead."

In another case, a very fine good-tempered Newfoundland dog was bitten; but, as several months elapsed, "the circumstance was almost forgotten, and he came up to the metropolis with his master. He became dull, disinclined to play, and refused all food. He was continually watching imaginary objects, but he did not snap at them. There was no howl, nor any disposition to bite. He offered himself to be caressed, and he was not satisfied except he was shaken by the paw." "On the second day," says Mr. Youatt, "I saw him. He watched every passing object with peculiar anxiety, and followed with deep attention the motions of a horse, his old acquaintance; but he made no effort to escape, nor evinced any disposition to do mischief. I went to him, and patted and coaxed him, and he told me as plainly as looks and actions, and a somewhat deepened whine could express it, how much he was gratified. I saw him on the third day. He was evidently dying. He could not crawl even to the door of his temporary kennel; but he pushed forward his paw a little way, and, as I shook it, I felt the convulsive muscular action which accompanies the departure of life."

The other diseases of dogs are very numerous, and

some of my readers will probably be astonished to find that a great many of them are nervous. Many dogs are subject to fits; and a story is told by Mr. Youatt, of a dog that used to go into fits whenever his master played on the flute. The dog dreaded the fits, and whenever he saw his master take his flute, he made his escape, if possible. Another disease which dogs have, is called turnside, or giddiness; and when a dog is affected by this complaint, for which there is no cure, he goes stumbling about as though he were blind, and always holding his head on one side. Another disease, which is often mistaken for madness, is epilepsy, and this is generally brought on by some violent emotion, such as excessive fear, or even excessive joy. An instance is recorded of a young sporting dog, who had been broken in with great difficulty, being so delighted when his master praised him for having done well, as to drop down in an epileptic fit. When a disease of this kind attacks a dog, a veterinary surgeon should be sent for, as the dog should instantly be bled.

Another nervous disease that dogs are afflicted with, is a singular twitching of the limbs, called chorea. For this also the dog should be placed under the care of a veterinary surgeon, as, if neglected or imperfectly treated, it will become paralysis.

The dog is exceedingly subject to rheumatism, and for this disease the best cure is a warm bath, taking great care, however, that the dog does not take cold after it. If this does not have the desired effect, the part affected should be rubbed with an embrocation composed of spirits of turpentine, hartshorn, camphorated spirits of wine, and laudanum; and the dog should have a dose of castor-oil.

Dogs are very often affected with a kind of ophthalmia, which is the result of exposure to cold after violent exertion. The cure is, giving the dog castor-oil or brimstone, and washing the eyes with acetate of lead, or some other sedative lotion.

The canker in the ear is a very common disease, particularly in water-dogs, or dogs that are frequently washed, and it is said to arise from the ears not being properly dried. When it first appears, which is known by the dog scratching his ears, and shaking his head frequently, the ear should be washed two or three times a day in lukewarm water, and carefully dried with a soft linen cloth, or a piece of lint. If the disease continues, a very weak solution of the extract of lead may be applied, and castor-oil or brimstone given.

Dogs are subject to many other diseases, but they are mostly of too serious a nature to be trifled with,

and a veterinary surgeon should be applied to. The best way of keeping dogs in health, is, however, to let them have plenty of exercise, particularly in a field or garden, if possible; to feed them well, but never to coax them to eat; and when anything is the matter with them, to let Nature take its way, unless symptoms appear of some serious disease, in which case it is best at once to have recourse to a doctor.

CATS.

CHAPTER II.

THE CAT.

It is singular that the two animals which are most completely domesticated, and which are inmates of almost every dwelling, are so constantly and bitterly at enmity with each other that their hatred has passed into a proverb; to live like cat and dog being expressive of continued warfare. It is true there are many examples of friendship between dogs and cats, and a case is even recorded of a cat having fed with her milk some young puppies who had lost their mother; but these instances are comparatively rare.

The difference of character between dogs and cats is very striking. Cats are quiet and gentle in their motions, and domestic in their habits; and hence they are generally the favourites of the female part of a family. The scientific differences between the cat and the dog are as equally decided as the difference in their manners. The cat has retractile claws, a

long flexible body, dilated eyes, and a rough tongue, in all which particulars it differs from the dog. The cat has also a noiseless stealthy step, and the habit of lying growling over its prey before it attempts to devour it. In this last particular, all animals of the cat kind differ most essentially from those related to the dogs; and in some cases it has been of essential service to persons attacked by any of the feline race to know this peculiarity in Natural History.

"All animals of the dog tribe," observes Mr. Waterton in his *Essays on Natural History*, "must be combated with might and main, and with unceasing exertion, in their attacks upon man; for, from the moment they obtain the mastery, they worry and tear their victim as long as life remains in it. On the contrary, animals of the cat tribe having once overcome their prey, they cease for a certain time to inflict further injury on it. Thus, during the momentous interval from the stroke which has laid a man beneath a lion, to the time when the lion shall begin to devour him, the man *may* have it in his power to rise again, either by his own exertions, or by the fortuitous intervention of an armed friend. But then all depends upon quiet, extreme quiet, on the part of the man, until he plunges his dagger into the heart of the animal;

for if he tries to resist, he is sure to feel the force of his adversary's claws and teeth with redoubled vengeance. Many years ago, Colonel Duff, in India, was laid low by the stroke of a Bengal tiger. On coming to himself, he found the animal standing over him. Recollecting that he had his dirk by his side, he drew it out of the case in the most cautious manner possible, and by one happy thrust quite through the heart, he laid the tiger dead at his side."

Both the lion and the tiger are considered animals of the cat kind; but the latter is most nearly allied to the common domestic cat. The resemblance between the tiger and the cat is, indeed, so striking as to be perceived at a glance. When children first see tigers in a Zoological Garden, they almost always call them great cats; and it is well-known that in their native forests, tigers purr exactly in the same manner as cats. The lion differs from the cat and the tiger in having no collar bones, so that it can neither climb nor strike a side blow, but in other respects the resemblance is striking. There is the same long flexible body, the same noiseless, stealthy step, and the same habit of lying growling over the prey before attempting to devour it.

In one of the legends of the Ancient Mythology, it is stated that Apollo created the lion to terrify

his sister Diana ; and she, to turn his fearful beast into ridicule, mimicked it in the form of a cat. On this account, cats were dedicated to Diana, not only when she bore her proper name, but when she was called Hecate ; and consequently we not only find frequent allusions to Hecate's cat in the legends of the ancient writers, but we are also told that the witches who worshipped Hecate had always a favourite cat.

Cats were greatly honoured by the ancient Egyptians ; and mummies were made of them after their death. They were considered sacred to the goddess Bubastes, the Egyptian Diana, whose priestesses were vowed to celibacy, and who passed a great portion of their time attending to the cats belonging to the temple ; and hence, perhaps, may have arisen the idea that a fondness for cats is a sign of old maidism.

Cats have in several instances become celebrated in history. It is said that Cambyses once took a city by furnishing each of his soldiers with a live cat instead of a buckler, as the Egyptian garrison rather than injure the cats, suffered themselves to be conquered. Mahomet had a favourite cat, who used to lie upon one of the long, loose sleeves of his robe, when he sat meditating. One day, when the cat was thus reposing, Mahomet being suddenly called upon to quell a revolt, seized a pair of scissors and

cut off a portion of his sleeve rather than disturb his sleeping favourite. A large hospital for cats, which, I believe, still exists in Damascus, is said to have been built in honour of the cat of Mahomet.

We are told by Debreves, in his *Voyage au Levant*, that there was once a cape in the island of Cyprus which was called Cat Cape, in honour of the feline race. In ancient times a monastery stood here, the inhabitants of which were obliged by their vows to maintain a great number of cats, in order that they might make war against the serpents which infested that island. This, the cats did most bravely; and they were so well taught, that at the sound of a certain bell, they all came trooping up the hill on which the abbey stood to take their repasts, and then rushing out again, they plunged into the recesses of the woods and caverns, and renewed their serpent chase with more vigour than before. Unfortunately, when the Turks conquered the island, the cats were destroyed with the monastery they had inhabited, and it does not appear that any other race of cats has ever acquired equal celebrity in battle, though they have found many other ways of distinguishing themselves.

The cat is generally supposed to have more attachment to places than persons; but this is so far from being always the case, that an instance is recorded

of a cat having travelled ninety miles to follow a family to whom she was much attached.

There are several different kinds of cats, but all those we know are domesticated, and evidently of a different origin to the animal usually called the wild cat. That creature is not only larger and more powerful than the common cat, but it is actually of a different internal construction, resembling those animals which are designed to feed solely on flesh. It also appears formed to inhabit a much colder country than the domestic cat, which is of a chilly habit, fond of warmth, and shrinking from cold and wet. The domestic cat, Dr. Turton tells us, was originally brought from Persia, and that our name of puss is corrupted from the word *pers*. There is still a Persian cat which has long silky grey hair, quite dark on the back, but softening into white under the body. This cat is not only very beautiful, but remarkably gentle and affectionate. The next in beauty to the Persian cat is the cat of Angora, which has fine silky hair particularly long on the tail. Some of these cats are grey, and others olive or yellowish, approaching in colour to the lion. The Chinese cat has long glossy hair, but its colour is tortoise-shell, and it differs from all other cats in having pendulous ears. All these cats with long hair are now comparatively

rare in England, though they are frequently met with in France. In England, however, there are many varieties, and the most beautiful of these is the tortoise-shell, the colours of which are black, white, and reddish orange; though it is a remarkable circumstance that generally only the female cats are marked in this manner, the male cats of this variety being merely marked with reddish stripes. Another variety of the British cat is of a glossy black; and another is white. The white cats are generally very delicate, apt to take cold, and liable to various diseases. They are also said to be frequently deaf. There is a breed of tail-less white cats in the Isle of Man, and also in Devonshire, but it does not appear that they differ in any other respect from the common kind.

"The cat," observes Dr. Turton, "has a more voluminous and expressive vocabulary than any other known brute: the short twitter of complacency and affection to her kittens; the purr of tranquillity and pleasure when seated on the lap of her mistress; the mew of distress; the growl of anger; and the horrible wailings of pain or fighting, are all quite distinct, and may easily be recognised by any one accustomed to the animal."

"The attitudes and motions of the cat," continues Dr. Turton, "are all of great elegance; and her

legs are of great strength and flexibility, in consequence of her being furnished with collar bones; she can, therefore, convey food to her mouth by her paw like the monkey. She can also climb, clasp, strike sideways, toss her prey upwards, and seat herself on an eminence of a very confined and narrow surface, such as the arm of an elbow chair," or the ledge of a window. The great flexibility of the cat's body renders it easy for her to swing herself from branch to branch of a tree; and her power of clasping and holding with her claws, enables her to cling firmly to any object to which she wishes to attach herself.

When cats are thrown from a window, or other high place, they always fall on their feet; as when they find themselves falling with the head downwards, they curve up their long slender bodies, so that the back forms an arch, while the legs remain extended. This changes the position of the centre of gravity so much, that the body of the cat makes a demi-tour in the air, and the feet become lowest. This aërial manœuvre also breaks the force of the fall, so that a cat is scarcely ever killed by falling from any height; and hence cats have so many hair-breadth escapes, that the proverb has arisen, when speaking of any creature difficult to kill, "It has as many lives as a cat."

Very few authentic anecdotes are told of the fidelity of the cat in comparison with those related of the dog. Some few, however, have been recorded, and one of the most interesting of these is that of a cat at Lyons. A murder had been committed on a woman in that city, and when the body was found, weltering in blood, it was observed that a large white cat was mounted on the cornice of a cupboard, where he seemed to have taken refuge. "He sat motionless, with his eyes fixed on the corpse, and his attitude and looks expressing horror and affright. The following morning he was found in the same station and attitude; and when the room was filled with the officers of justice, neither the clattering of the soldiers' arms, nor the loud conversation of the company, could in the least degree divert his attention. As soon, however, as the suspected persons were brought in, his eyes glared with increased fury; his hair bristled; he darted into the middle of the apartment, where he stopped for a moment to gaze at them, and then precipitately retreated. The countenances of the assassins were disconcerted, and they now, for the first time during the whole course of the horrid business, felt their atrocious audacity forsake them." They were afterwards

brought to trial, condemned, and, before their execution, confessed their guilt.

Another instance of the sagacity of the cat in detecting criminals occurred in the month of September, 1850. The mistress of a public-house in the Commercial Road, London, on going into her tap-room late in the evening, found her favourite cat there in a state of very great excitement. It would not suffer itself to be stroked, but continually rushed to the chimney-piece and then returned to its mistress, mewing so loudly that the landlady became alarmed, and calling for assistance, a man was found concealed up the chimney, who had evidently hidden himself there with a design of robbing the house, as it was discovered on his examination before the magistrate that he had previously robbed several public-houses in the vicinity by remaining last in the tap-room, and then secreting himself in a similar manner.

A striking instance of the personal attachment of these animals was displayed by the cat of Madame Helvetius. This creature used continually to lie at the feet of her mistress, seemingly ready to defend her. It would never take food from any hand but that of its mistress; and it would not allow any one else to caress it; it would never touch any of the birds which its mistress kept; and it would

obey her commands in everything, fetching anything she wanted in its mouth like a dog. During the last illness of its mistress the poor cat never quitted her chamber; and though it was removed after her death, it made its way back the next morning, slowly and mournfully pacing over the bed, its mistress's favourite chair, and her toilette, and crying most piteously all the time. Two or three days after the funeral of its mistress, the poor cat was found stretched on the grave quite dead, having apparently died from the excess of its grief.

Cats are generally very bold and courageous, particularly in defence of their young; they are also revengeful, and seldom forgive an injury. I once knew an instance of a cat's revenge, the effects of which I saw myself. My mother had a servant who disliked cats exceedingly, and particularly a large black cat which we had, which she was in the habit of beating whenever she had an opportunity. The cat disliked the girl, but was always afraid of her: one day, however, when the girl was carrying some dishes down stairs into the kitchen, and had both her hands full, the cat flew at her, and scratched her arms and face severely.

On the other hand, cats are very grateful, and a cat which had had a thorn taken out of her foot

by a man-servant, remembered him, and welcomed him with delight when she saw him again after an absence of two years.

We had a black cat that we used to call the Demon, from its appearance, and the violence of its temper. This cat could not endure strangers, and always showed her dislike to them as decidedly as a dog would have done. I was never very fond of the cat, and having been away some weeks, when I returned she did not know me, and set up her back at me, as she would have done to a stranger. When I spoke, however, she looked up in my face, and immediately her whole appearance changed. The swelled tail shrank to its usual dimensions, the furious aspect vanished, and the cat rubbed herself against me with all the caressing humility of manner common to the species.

Cats are generally said not to be so teachable as dogs, but they may be easily taught to jump over the hand, and to perform similar feats of dexterity. A story is told by Dr. Smellie, of a cat that had learnt to lift the latch of a door; and other tales have been related of cats that have been taught to ring a bell by hanging to the bell-rope. In general, however, the instances of sagacity which have been observed in cats, have not been taught to them, but discovered, as it were, by the animals

themselves. One remarkable instance of sagacity in a cat, I was witness to. We had a very beautiful black and white cat, which had unfortunately hurt its leg, and when I saw it, I was so sorry for the poor thing that I ordered some milk to be brought and given to it in my presence. During the whole time that the leg was bad, I never saw the cat without giving it milk; but at last I found out that though the cat had become quite well, yet, whenever it saw me, it used to walk lame, and hold up its paw, as though it were painful to put it to the ground.

It is generally said that male cats do not like kittens, and that they will kill them if possible. We had, however, an instance to the contrary. A strange cat had two kittens in the stable belonging to our house; and one day, pitying the wretched condition of the cat, when I saw her in the garden, I ordered her some milk. A large Tom-cat we had, watched our proceedings very attentively, and while the cat was lapping the milk, he went to the stable, and brought one of the kittens in his mouth, and placed it beside the saucer, and then fetched the other, looking up in my face and mewing when he had done so, as much as to say, "You have fed the mother, so you may as well feed the children," which we did; and I must add, for the credit

of Tom's character, that he never attempted to touch the milk himself.

The diseases of the cat are nearly the same as those of the dog. The distemper generally affects them between the first and third month of their lives. The symptoms are, that the kitten will not take any food; that it ceases to play; and appears to become very chilly, seeking the chimney corner, or any warm place in which it can hide itself. When a young kitten has this disease, it generally recovers; but if it is a full-grown cat, it frequently dies. The remedy is to give brimstone, or some other aperient medicine, and to feed the cat upon light biscuit (such as that which is given to children), spread with butter. With this a little manna is sometimes given, if the cat will eat it; the animal is then left quiet for about twenty-four hours, after which more biscuit, butter, and manna are administered; but by this time the cat is generally cured. It is a good plan always to put sulphur in the water that cats drink, as this keeps them in health, in the same way as a similar proceeding does dogs.

CHAPTER III.

THE SQUIRREL.

THE squirrel is a beautiful little creature, very agile and graceful in its movements, and extremely docile. Though not so intelligent as the dog, it may be taught to jump from one hand to the other to search for a hidden nut, &c.; and it soon knows its name, and the persons who feed it. It is, indeed, capable of affection, though not to the same degree as the dog or the cat. When squirrels are to be kept in confinement, they should be accustomed to it from the nest, as it rarely happens that a squirrel which has once known the charms of liberty, can reconcile itself to a cage. If, however, a squirrel has never been in a perfectly wild state, it may easily be made quite tame and domestic, and may be suffered to roam about the room without there being any danger of its wishing to make its escape. It is in this state that a squirrel is seen to most advantage; as it will run up a window curtain, and along the

cornice at the top, with wonderful grace and agility; it will also run round the cornice of a room, and if it is richly carved, it will peep out between the leaves and flowers in a very amusing manner. Situations of this kind are favourite hiding-places with tame squirrels, and an instance is recorded of no less than seventeen lumps of sugar being found in the cornice of a drawing-room in which a squirrel had been kept, besides innumerable nuts, pieces of biscuit, &c.

When a squirrel is not allowed to be at liberty, he is generally kept in a cage with a revolving barrel, in order that the squirrel may amuse himself in making it turn round and round. This is, however, a miserable contrivance, as the poor little creature can never move without setting his wheel in motion, and the incessant whirling must make it a kind of torture.

The squirrel has remarkably brilliant eyes, and they are so formed that it can see clearly with very little light. This is an admirable provision of Nature, as the squirrel in a wild state has to seek its food among the leaves at the foot of trees, where the thick foliage almost shuts out the light. The squirrel has remarkably sharp teeth, and it is classed with the Rodentia or Gnawing Animals. This habit of gnawing everything that it comes near, makes it

necessary that the cages in which squirrels are kept should be lined with tin, as otherwise they will very soon be destroyed.

The scientific name given to the squirrel (*Sciùrus*) signifies a shadowy tail, and alludes to the peculiar appearance of the tail of the animal. The action of the squirrel is not running but leaping; and in a wild state the squirrel will bound from branch to branch almost as rapidly as a bird can fly. The common squirrel is of a reddish-brown, but there is a grey squirrel which is very beautiful, and which is a native of Carolina. There is also a black squirrel found in America; and there are various other kinds in different parts of the world. The flying squirrel belongs to a different genus, and is a very curious animal. It is furnished with a singular kind of membrane which extends from the fore foot to the hind foot, and enables it to spring through the air with such velocity as to appear like flying. The most common of the flying squirrels is one that is a native of North America; but there are others to be found in Java and other islands in the Eastern Archipelago, some of them being so small as to be called winged mice.

The best mode of teaching squirrels to know any name that may be given to them, is always to call them by it when they are fed. In the same manner, they may be taught to jump on the right hand, in

preference to the left one, to search for hidden nuts, &c. It is not, however, very easy to teach the squirrel anything that is at all complicated, as its memory does not appear to be good, and it soon forgets even the place where it has hidden sugar, &c. Thus, when any trick has been taught a squirrel, it is necessary to practise it frequently, and it is safest not to attempt to show its sagacity, unless it is in the constant habit of performing.

The food of the squirrel is generally the common nut, but it will eat walnuts, chestnuts, and acorns; and when these cannot be obtained, it may be fed with a little bread and milk, or bread soaked in water. This food, however, should be given but sparingly, and great care should be taken that it is perfectly fresh, as it is extremely injurious to the squirrel if it becomes at all sour. Squirrels should be kept exceedingly clean; the bottom of the cage should have a little fresh gravel strewed upon it every day, and the bed should be supplied every second day with fresh hay. When squirrels are tolerably tame, they are frequently kept in little ornamental kennels, with a platform for the squirrel to sit on, and a little chain to fasten to a collar round the squirrel's neck. When squirrels are bought, it is necessary to look at their teeth, as when they are old their teeth become large, strong, and

perfectly yellow, and the young ones are considered much the best.

Squirrels are subject to several diseases, arising from confinement, over-feeding, and want of cleanliness, the remedies for which are evident. In general, however, when a squirrel becomes ill, it soon dies.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RABBIT.

RABBITS can hardly be called domestic pets, since they are scarcely ever kept in the house. They are gnawing animals, and, as such, are classed by naturalists with the squirrels, in the natural order *Rodéntia.* Like the squirrel, also, they leap rather than walk. There are several different kinds, but the most distinct variety is the lop-eared. The ears of these creatures are very long, and hang down on each side, and the finest specimens have been known to fetch five, ten, and even twenty guineas each. There are, however, many kinds even of these, and some carry their ears stretched out on each side like horns. Rabbits are of various colours, of which the grey is the most common, and of the least value. Pure white, with red eyes, is much more valuable; but a tortoise-shell ranks the highest.

Rabbits are generally kept in what are called hutches; that is, in boxes with open bars in front,

as fresh air is absolutely necessary to keep rabbits alive, though draughts are fatal to them.

It does not appear possible to teach rabbits any kind of tricks, and they do not appear even to know their names.

Rabbits may be fed with almost any kind of vegetable matter, but the best food for them consists of celery, parsley, and carrots. They are very fond of cabbage stumps and lettuces, but they should be given sparingly. They will also eat turnips, parsneps, and even potatoes in a raw state. In the spring it is reckoned good to give them tares. They will also eat dandelion, sow-thistles, and other kinds of weeds; but when they are fed with green food of this description, great care must be taken not to give it to them in a wet state. In the winter rabbits may be fed with tea-leaves, and corn and grey peas soaked in water: the tea-leaves thould be quite dry, and given only in small quantities.

Rabbits are subject to many diseases, for one of which (a liver complaint) there is no cure. What is called the snuffles is occasioned by damp or cold, and the cure is, keeping the rabbits dry, and feeding them with boiled potatoes made into a paste with bran or barley-meal; and instead of water, a little skimmed milk may be given them to drink. Too much green food, particularly if it be given to the

rabbits while there is water on it, is apt to make them swell enormously in the body ; and when this is the case dry food only should be given. Squeezed tea-leaves seem to act upon rabbits as a powerful stimulant, and are very efficacious in strengthening the animals when given in small quantities.

RABBITS, GUINEA-PIG, SQUIRREL, AND WHITE MICE.

CHAPTER V.

THE GUINEA PIG.

GUINEA pigs also belong to the order *Rodéntia*, and though they have a disagreeable smell, they are remarkable for their cleanliness, as they will not suffer the least particle of dirt to remain on their hair; and when two are kept together, one may frequently be seen cleaning the coat of the other.

The habits, food, and diseases of guinea pigs, very closely resemble those of the rabbit, and like that animal, if not kept clean, they will very soon become diseased. Though they come originally from Brazil, they have been so long naturalised in temperate climates, that they will bear a considerable degree of cold without inconvenience. They should be fed in the same way as rabbits, and they are exceedingly fond of tea-leaves, which, however, should not be given to them too abundantly. Probably the best food for them is parsley or carrots.

CHAPTER VI.

WHITE MICE.

WHITE mice are very beautiful little creatures, and they are so tame and gentle that they are admirably calculated for domestic pets. They may, indeed, be suffered to run about a room, and if well fed, they seldom try to escape. They may be taught to come when called, but they come to the voice of their feeder, and not to any particular name; as, though they may appear to come to a name, they pay no attention to that name when it is repeated by a stranger.

White mice are frequently kept in a revolving cage, like those sold for squirrels; and cages are also formed for them with separate rooms one above another, and a staircase to the upper room, in which the food is generally placed. This contrivance is said to keep the mice in health, and they certainly appear very fond of going up and

down the stairs. White mice are generally fed with bread soaked in milk, and afterwards squeezed tolerably dry; but they are also very fond of oats, beans, and peas, which do not disagree with them if taken in moderate quantities.

CHAPTER VII.

MONKEYS.

MONKEYS are not very agreeable domestic pets, as they are extremely fond of mischief, and are very frequently vicious and spiteful to children. The only kind that is safe to keep in the house is, perhaps, the marmozet, or striped monkey. This is a pretty little creature, with a body only about eight inches long, and a tail considerably longer than its body. Its body is very slender, but it looks much larger than it really is, from its being covered with very long hairs. These creatures must be carefully watched if kept in the same room with gold fish, as they are very fond of catching and eating them. They will also, if kept near a pond, contrive to catch and eat other small fish, particularly very small eels.

Though monkeys approach so near the human species in some respects, they are not very easily

taught any tricks. They should be fed upon bread soaked in water, and any kind of fruit that it may be convenient to give them; but they should not have any kind of meat when kept in confinement. They are very fond of nuts and biscuits, both of which may be given to them in moderation.

Most of the large kinds are vicious, and bite severely when they are offended. They are very subject to diseases of the lungs, and when they once become ill, they are very rarely cured.

CHAPTER VIII.

PARROTS, AND OTHER FOREIGN TALKING BIRDS.

Among all the domestic pets kept in a state of confinement, perhaps birds are the most general favourites, particularly with young people and ladies generally, as they are easily kept and attended to.

The kinds of birds which are most generally kept as pets, are either those which are called talking birds, from their facility in imitating the sound of the human voice, or singing birds; though, it must be confessed, it seems a pity to put the latter in cages, since their songs are so much more charming when they are at liberty in the open air. This, however, is not the place to enter into a discussion on the subject of keeping birds in confinement. My object now is, to state how they may be best taken care of; and there can be no doubt that foreign birds, at least, are much more happy in their cages

if well taken care of than they would be in the open air. In fact, all birds that have been accustomed to confinement would be most cruelly treated if they were suddenly set at liberty, for they would not know where to go, nor what to do; they would be unable to procure food, because they would not know where to look for it; and they would be attacked by other birds, which have been always in a state of liberty, and which show no pity for poor strangers thus suddenly cast amongst them. I remember once seeing a poor canary bird, which had escaped from its cage, beset by a crowd of sparrows, and so dreadfully frightened by them, that when I opened the window it flew into the room and nestled on my shoulder; and after it had been restored to its proper mistress, I had the pleasure to see it in its old cage, apparently as happy as it was possible for a little bird to be, and to hear it carol its songs of joy and gladness. I would, therefore, recommend my young friends not to think of setting any tame bird they may have at liberty, but only sedulously to attend to the wants of any little captive they may have; as they must never forget that a bird in a cage can do nothing for itself, and that it must be waited upon most carefully to keep it in health.

Of course these observations do not apply to birds

recently captured, for it is cruel to retain them a moment; but I only allude to those birds which have been taken in the nest, and which have never been in the habit of providing for themselves.

As the talking birds are, generally speaking, the largest, and the most important, I shall commence what I have to say on the subject of birds with them, and shall proceed to the singing birds afterwards.

The principal foreign talking birds which are kept in a state of confinement, are parrots, parroquets, lories, cockatoos, and macaws.

Parrots are the most interesting of all the talking birds, not only from their beauty, but from the very great facility with which they may be taught to repeat not only words in almost every language, but even sentences; which last they sometimes utter with an air of sagacity and thought, which is very amusing, and which makes the bird appear as though it really understood and meant what it says. How far this is the case, cannot, of course, be ascertained, but certainly in other respects the parrot does not appear a clever bird, and it seems very difficult to teach it to perform any tricks. We never hear of parrots firing guns, choosing cards, or doing any of the ingenious tricks which other tame birds are so easily taught; and the utmost exercise

of ingenuity that I have ever seen displayed by a parrot in addition to its talking powers, was an awkward attempt at dancing. I have also heard of parrots being taught to whistle tunes, and in some cases, I believe they have been taught to sing a verse or two of some popular song; but I think these latter instances are comparatively rare.

Parrots belong to the climbing birds, and their feet are consequently better adapted for grasping or holding than for walking. Hence, the parrot walks very badly, and seems more at its ease on the branch of a tree, or on its perch, than on the ground. When it climbs, it uses its bill as a third hand, and this bill is very peculiar in shape, and very strong.

In a wild state parrots are said to be very noisy birds, but when domesticated they are remarkably quiet, and will often sit for hours together apparently half asleep.

In Edwards's *Voyage up the River Amazon*, a most amusing account is given of a large green parrot which had evidently escaped from a cage, and which was surrounded by a host of wild parrots, to whom he was showing off his accomplishments. After a few words in Portuguese, a burst of imitative shrieks and vociferous applause followed. "'Ha! ha! ha! —a!' and Poll rolled his head, and doubled up his body, quite beside himself with laughter. Tumul-

tuous applause and encores. 'Ha! ha! ha! Papaguyrì—a!' and he spread his wings, and began to dance on his perch with emphasis. The effect upon the auditory was prodigious, and all sorts of rapturous contortions were testifying their intelligence, when some suspicious eye spied our hiding-place, and the affrighted birds hurried off, their borrowed notes of joy ludicrously changed to natural cries of alarm." In another place, Mr. Edwards gives an account of a quarrel between a macaw and some parrots which he was bringing up the river Amazon in a boat. The macaw "was perpetually quarrelling with a pair of green parrots, and all the time so hoarsely screaming that we were tempted to twist his neck. The parrots had to have a pitched battle over every ear of corn, and both they and the macaw had repeatedly flown into the water, where they but narrowly escaped a grave. There were two green parroquets, and one odd one, prettiest of all, with a yellow top, and they could not agree any better than their elders. Yellow-top prided himself on his strength, and considered himself as good as a dozen green ones, while they resented his impudence, and scolded away in ear-piercing tones that made the cabin an *inferno*. At other times they all three banded together, and, trotting about deck, insulted the parrots with their impertinencies. When

a flock of their relations passed over, the whole family set up a scream which might have been heard by all the birds within a league."

At a later period of the voyage, the macaw and the parrots were placed in one particular part of the boat, and a rope being crossed several times on the deck, the parrots were placed beyond it, and with some difficulty were made to understand that they were to remain in this place; so there they sat, scarcely knowing whether to laugh or cry. "The parroquets were stationed at the after-part of the cabin, and the change which had come over one of the green ones from Barra was amusing. She had been the wildest and crossest little body on board, always resenting favours, and biting kindly hands. But since the lately received young ones had been put with her, she had assumed all the watchfulness of a mother, feeding them, taking hold of their bills and shaking them up to promote digestion, and generally keeping them in decent order. She had no more time to gad about deck, but, soberly inclined, with the feathers of her head erect and matronly, she stuck to her corner, and minded her own business. Meanwhile, yellow-top looked on with the calm dignity of a gentleman of family."

I have already mentioned that parrots may be

taught to repeat words, or even sentences, but this can only be done by repeating the same words to them several times a day till they have acquired them, the parrot all the time being kept in a quiet room, and being suffered to hear no sounds but those it is to learn. They will, however, often learn any sounds that they hear frequently, without being taught; and parrots that are hung on the outside of a window in a street, will repeat all the cries that they hear. The story of Vert Vert, which has been turned into verse by a French poet, is a decided proof of this. This parrot had been brought up in a convent, and had learnt to repeat all the services of the church. The nuns of a neighbouring convent having heard of this extraordinary bird, sent a petition that it might be allowed to pay them a visit. The request was granted, but unfortunately poor Vert Vert was sent by a common passage-boat; and, on the road, he picked up the oaths and vulgar language of the boatmen and their passengers. With this language he saluted the abbess and her nuns whom he was sent to visit, instead of the hymns and religious sentences they had been led to expect; and the horror of the nuns may be easily imagined. Poor Vert Vert was sent back in disgrace to his own convent, where his former friends were obliged to keep him in solitary confinement

till he had forgotten all the horrid things he had unfortunately learnt.

The story of the parrot of Prince Maurice who could hold a conversation, is well known, but not equally well authenticated. It is, however, certain that parrots appear to know the names of the food that they like best to eat; and I myself have heard a parrot in France call for potatoes, almonds, and other things she was particularly fond of. This parrot appeared to know the names of the servants of the family, as she would call to them by their right names when she saw them pass. Living in France she usually spoke French; but, as she came from Spanish America, she had been taught some Spanish also; and frequently when she was alone she would practise some Spanish songs that she had been taught, but she always sang them in a low voice to herself, as if she were aware that they would not be understood by the French persons around her. This parrot was exceedingly fond of her mistress, and when her mistress had a baby she became so jealous of it, and so vicious, that it was found absolutely necessary to send her away.

Parrots are subject to various diseases, the most remarkable of which is the gout, which occasions the feet to swell, and appears to make them so painful, that the bird may frequently be seen resting

itself on the points of its wings. The usual remedy is bathing in warm water, or in a decoction of soap-wort. To do this, a small cage is made with a moveable tin bottom like a patty pan, and in this is placed the water into which the bird is put so that its feet may be covered. The bath should be taken away as soon as the water begins to get cold; and the feet should be wiped dry with a soft towel. It is best to keep the bird for a few days after this in a cage with a smooth bottom, and without any perches. Parrots are very subject to inflammation arising from cold. When this is the case, the bird appears dull and inactive, sleeping in the morning, and not taking its food. The most effectual remedy in this case is to feed it on whole grits boiled soft and mixed with milk and bread, and with the yolk of an egg boiled hard. Sometimes Indian corn may be given, and the juice of scalded rape seed substituted for common water, and occasionally a little magnesia may be given dissolved in water.

Parrots are also subject to a kind of irritation in the skin, which makes them pluck off their feathers; and they are sometimes seized with apoplexy. Both these diseases are supposed to arise from being fed with improper food; for the first, the bird should be bathed in lukewarm water, and then anointed with palm oil; and for the second, a slight puncture should

be made near the claw to let blood. In France, when parrots have the gout, they bathe their feet in warm wine; and when they appear suffering from cold, they give them wine in which cinnamon has been steeped. When the cold appears to be in the head, they bathe the nostrils with a sponge and warm water; and when they appear to be suffering from indigestion, they give them warm water in which sugar has been dissolved, in order to make them vomit. For the disease which induces the parrot to pluck off its feathers, they wash the body with warm water, and then rub it over with a kind of salve formed of pomatum and wormwood, the bitter of the wormwood disgusting the parrot when it again attempts to pull out its feathers. They also give occasionally water in which a small quantity of Epsom salts has been dissolved. Asthma is another disease with which parrots are often affected, and it is known by their holding their beaks open as if to gasp for more air. The remedy is to leave off all kinds of nuts and seeds, and to give them boiled bread and milk, which should be only about the consistence of pap. It must be quite cold before it is given to the birds, and should be made fresh every day. They should also have lettuce, endive, or water-cress twice or three times a week; and they should be allowed plenty of lukewarm water to

bathe. In most cases the bread and milk, which acts as an aperient, need not be given for more than two or three days.

The parrot, in a state of nature, lives principally upon the kernels of fruits, throwing away the pulp as we should throw away the rind of an orange; but in a domestic state, it will eat the pulp of any fruit that is given to it. It is also fond of soaked bread or biscuit, mashed potatoes, and, in fact, almost any vegetable food that may be offered to it; most kinds of which agree with it very well, though too much of green vegetable or fruit is apt to bring on dysentery. It is a remarkable fact, however, that the seed of the saff-flower (*Cárthamus tinctórius*), which is a violent drastic purgative to human beings, may be eaten by the parrot with perfect impunity; and, indeed, it grows fat upon it. Parrots are very fond of meat, and will pick a bone with great relish; but it is considered very bad for them, and is said to bring on that state of irritation in the skin which makes them pluck out their feathers. The best kind of food for parrots, in a state of confinement, is some kind of grain, or nut, varied with bread soaked in boiled milk, or milk and water. Parrots are very fond of almonds, which should be given to them in the outer shell, in order that the bird may crack the nut, and pick it out of

the shell itself, as this will prevent the parrot from eating too rapidly, and allow it time to digest its food. Nuts should also be given to parrots in the shell, in the same manner, and for the same reason.

Parrots, when well treated, are very long lived. They have frequently been known to live, in a state of confinement, for fifty or sixty years, and one parrot was known to have lived upwards of ninety-three years; though this appears to be the utmost limit to which the age of these birds will attain, as the parrot in question was blind, deaf, and very infirm. Parrots always live much longer when kept on open perches in a room, than when they are confined in cages; and these perches should always have gravel at the bottom, which should, if possible, be changed every day. The gravel is essential to the digestion of the food of the bird; for as parrots have no teeth, they are furnished with gizzards, like the domestic fowl, into which they take the gravel, to help them to digest their food. The food is best placed in glass or earthenware pans, as tin boxes require much care to keep them clean, and zinc boxes are poisonous if the food contained in them becomes, in the slightest degree, acid. Many persons give parrots a little Chili powder, or a ripe capsicum, cut small and mingled with their food

occasionally, particulary in damp cold weather; and if the parrot takes this freely, it may be given about once a month or six weeks; but the bird should not be forced to take it if it seems to dislike it.

There are many kinds of parrots, but the grey or African parrot is considered the best. This bird has a plumage of pearl grey or slate-colour; the feathers of the head, and the under parts of the body being tipped with white. The tail is of a dark scarlet. This is the most tractable of all parrots, and the most easily taught to speak. The Amazon parrot is of a bright green, shading into yellow. It is the hardiest of all the kinds, and the cheapest. As it is easily taught to speak, it is the kind most generally kept as a pet bird on the continent, while the grey parrot is the kind most common in England.

The parroquet used to be considered the smallest of all the parrot tribe; one species (the rose-ringed parroquet) being no larger than a lark. These birds are generally kept in pairs, as they are said to pine when alone. The parroquet is very delicate, and requires great care to keep it alive. It is very difficult to teach it to speak, but it is very graceful in its movements, and very affectionate. Mrs. Lee, in her *Elements of Natural History*, men-

tions a kind of parroquet which spoke French distinctly, and which, being allowed to fly about the house, "made so good a stand against the cats, that no danger was apprehended from them. When it saw any one writing, it would fly very softly over their shoulders, draw the pen from between their fingers, and fly away with it in triumph, highly delighted if it were chased in consequence. If the ladies put on their bonnets to walk in the garden while the window was open, it instantly darted out, and waited for them, meeting them at the door, and after flying round them as they walked a short distance, returned to its perch by the same window." This kind of parroquet was of the same species as that which was the favourite of Alexander the Great, and which takes its scientific name (*Palæórnis Alexándri*) from that monarch. These parroquets were very highly valued by the Romans, by whom they were kept in cages of gold, ivory, and tortoise-shell.

The Moreton Bay parrot, is of a rich golden hue, but it cannot be taught to speak distinctly. There are various other kinds of parrot, most of them natives of South America, or Australia.

The lory is a small kind of parrot, of which there are several varieties. What is called the shell lory, or shell parrot, is a very small bird, with a rich

golden plumage, spotted with blue. The variegated or cream lory, which is sometimes called the East Indian parrot, is also very beautiful. It is about the size of a pigeon, and its principal colour is a bright red, variegated with blue, yellow, violet, and green. The most interesting kind, however, is the blue mountain, or blue capped lory, which is a beautiful, affectionate, and intelligent bird. It has an excellent memory, and may be taught to repeat sentences. It will also easily learn to whistle a tune. It is, however, very delicate, and will soon die if it be not carefully guarded from the cold.

The Australian lories, or lorikeets, are not larger than humming birds, and, like those delicate little creatures, their food is principally the nectar of flowers; for, as Broderip observes, "nothing more gross than the juices of delicious fruits do they touch. A suctorial tongue, of the most exquisite workmanship, fits them for this diet of the gods. Woe to the unhappy captive whose mistress does not know this; it starves in the midst of apparent plenty. One of these wretched ones, when a coloured drawing of a flower was presented to it, applied its parched tongue to the paint and pasteboard; and even did this in the extremity of its distress, to the ruder image on a piece of flowered chintz."

The cockatoo is the hardiest of all the parrot

tribe, and it is remarkable for its docility and its affectionate disposition, though it cannot easily be taught to speak more than a few words at a time. It readily learns, however, to bow its head, to spread out its wings, to make a curtsey, and to perform several other tricks at the word of command. It also learns to say, "Pretty cockatoo," &c.; and when told to kiss, it makes a kind of smacking with its bill. There are several kinds of cockatoo, the largest of which is about two feet in length. Some of these birds are natives of the East Indies, and others come from Australia; but they all very much resemble each other, their plumage being white, slightly tinged with pink, or pale primrose. They have all crests, the crest being generally about six inches long, and falling back upon the head. The great red-crested cockatoo is a very large bird, being about two feet in length. It is a noble looking creature, and is very easily tamed. Its white plumage is beautifully tinged with rose colour; the tail is variegated with pale lemon, and the beak is blue. This bird is remarkable for the facility with which it imitates the sounds of domestic animals, particularly the crowing of the cock, from which it is said the genus receives its popular English name of cockatoo.

In Backhouse's *Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies*, there is an account of some black

CHAPTER IX.

THE RAVEN, AND OTHER BRITISH TALKING-BIRDS.

THE RAVEN is a well-known bird, which, if taken from the nest when only about half-fledged, may easily be rendered tame, and taught not only to utter a few words, but to perform a great variety of tricks. Anecdotes of several ravens have been recorded, as indeed the raven appears to have been a favourite with several men of genius, who have left us memorials of their pets. I shall, however, confine myself to three of these:—the raven of Mr. Waterton, and those of Mr. Charles Dickens, one of which he has immortalized in his *Barnaby Rudge*.

Mr. Waterton's Raven was called Marco, and Marco could do everything a bird could do. "He was as playful as a kitten; he showed vast aptitude in learning to talk; and he was so correct an imitator of sounds, that I had every hope of teaching him the tune which Goldsmith informs us he heard a raven sing, with 'great distinctness,

BIRDS.

truth, and humour.' Marco was fond of seeing a carriage approach the house [Walton Hall]. He would attend company on their arrival at the bridge, and wait near the gate until their return ; and then he would go part of the way back with them. He was an universal favourite, notwithstanding that at times his evil genius prompted him to commit almost unpardonable excesses ; so much so, that I often said to him in the words of the poet,—

> 'In all thy humours, whether grave or mellow,
> Thou art such a touchy, testy, pleasant fellow ;
> Hast so much wit, and mirth, and glee about thee,
> There is no living with thee, nor without thee.'

One day, he took a sudden dislike to an old duck, with which, till then, he had been upon the best of terms, and he killed her in an instant. The coachman and Marco were inseparable companions ; but at last they had a serious and a fatal quarrel. Marco bit him severely in the thumb ; upon which, this ferocious son of the whip seized the bird by the throat, and deliberately strangled it."

As to the general appearance of the raven, no bird in the creation exhibits finer symmetry. "His beautiful proportions, and his glossy plumage, are calculated to strike the eye of every beholder with admiration. He is by far the largest of all the pie tribe in Europe ; and, according to our notion of

things, no bird can be better provided with the means of making his way through the world; for his armour is solid, his spirit unconquerable, and his strength surprising. Necromancers of old were noted for their attention to the movements of the raven; and they are said to have counted no less than sixty-five different inflexions of his voice. His sable robe and hollow croaking seem to have rendered him of vast importance in those days; when old women were known to travel through the air on broom-staves, and when the destiny of man was frequently foretold by the flight of birds."

"The ancients," Mr. Waterton observes, "were of opinion that the raven lived to an extreme old age. I do not exactly see," he continues, "how the longevity can be proved, whilst the bird roves at liberty from place to place, far beyond the reach of man; and, indeed, the difficulty of proof is noways diminished when the raven is brought up tame in civilized society, for its perpetual bickerings with stranger dogs, and its incautious approach to the heels of vicious horses, seldom fail, sooner or later, to bring it to an untimely end. Still, I should be the last man in the world to question the veracity of remote antiquity, upon the mere strength of hasty surmise. Those who are gone before us, may possibly have had better opportunities of ascertaining

the longevity of birds, than any which we now possess. I never tire with reading the old fables in which birds are introduced. Notwithstanding the impossibilities and absurdities which are manifest in those rich effusions of ancient wit and humour, still I can always find much in them to convince me, that the writers of the olden times were no strangers to the real habits of birds. Ovid, who flourished some two thousand years ago, tells of a remarkably old raven. It might, indeed, have been a companion for Methuselah himself."

"Pity it is, however, that the raven, a bird of such note and consequence in times gone by, should be exposed to unrelenting persecution in our own days of professed philanthropy. His noble aspect, his aërial evolutions, and his wonderful modulations of voice, all contribute to render him an ornament to any gentleman's park. He can scarcely be styled a bird of rapine, in the strict sense of the word; for, in the few inland parts of this country where he is still protected, we hear of no very alarming acts of depredation on his part. A stray chicken or so, during the time that he is obliged to feed his young; a rickety lamb, which would never make mutton; a leveret started from her seat by the village mole-catcher, make up nearly the whole amount of the raven's plunder. For my

own part, I would freely give him these; ay, and a dozen pheasants annually to boot, if he would but visit us again, and once more attempt to take up a permanent abode amongst us."

It is well-known that Mr. Dickens has introduced a raven in the story of *Barnaby Rudge;* and in the new edition of that work published in 1849, he says, "as it is Mr. Waterton's opinion that ravens are gradually becoming extinct in England, I offer a few words here about mine. The raven in this story is a compound of two great originals, of whom I have been, at different times, the proud possessor. The first was in the bloom of his youth, when he was discovered in a modest retirement of London, by a friend of mine, and given to me. He had from the first, as Sir Hugh Evans says of Anne Page, 'good gifts,' which he improved by study and attention in a most exemplary manner. He slept in a stable—generally on horseback—and so terrified a Newfoundland dog by his preternatural sagacity, that he has been known, by the mere superiority of his genius, to walk off unmolested with the dog's dinner from before his face. He was rapidly rising in acquirements and virtues, when, in an evil hour, his stable was newly painted. He observed the workmen closely, saw that they were careful of the paint, and immediately burned to

possess it. On their going to dinner, he ate up all they had left behind, consisting of a pound or two of white lead; and this youthful indiscretion terminated in death. While I was yet inconsolable for his loss, another friend of mine in Yorkshire discovered an older and more gifted raven at a village public-house, which he prevailed upon the landlord to part with for a consideration, and sent up to me. The first act of this sage was, to administer to the effects of his predecessor, by disinterring all the cheese and half-pence he had buried in the garden—a work of immense labour and research, to which he devoted all the energies of his mind. When he had achieved this task, he applied himself to the acquisition of stable language, in which he soon became such an adept, that he would perch outside my window, and drive imaginary horses with great skill all day. Perhaps even I never saw him at his best, for his former master sent his duty with him, 'and if I wished the bird to come out very strong, would I be so good as show him a drunken man,'—which I never did, having (unfortunately) none but sober people at hand; but I could hardly have respected him more, whatever the stimulating influences of this sight might have been. He had not the least respect, I am sorry to say, for me in return, or for anybody but the cook; to whom he was much attached,—but

only, I fear, as a policeman might have been. Once, I met him unexpectedly, about half a mile off, walking down the middle of the public street, attended by a pretty large crowd, and spontaneously exhibiting the whole of his accomplishments. His gravity under those trying circumstances, I never can forget, nor the extraordinary gallantry with which, refusing to be brought home, he defended himself behind a pump, until overpowered by numbers. It may have been that he was too bright a genius to live long, or it may have been that he took some pernicious substance into his bill, and thence into his maw,— which is not improbable, seeing that he new-pointed the greater part of the garden-wall by digging out the mortar, broke countless squares of glass by scraping away the putty all round the frames, and tore up, and swallowed, in splinters, the greater part of a wooden staircase of six steps, and a landing; but after some three years, he, too, was taken ill, and died before the kitchen fire. He kept his eye to the last upon the meat as it roasted, and suddenly turned over on his back, with a sepulchral cry of 'Cuckoo!' Since then I have been ravenless."

When ravens are young they have a most enormous appetite, and, in fact, at any period of their growth they will eat voraciously, and will hide anything that they cannot devour. They have also a

propensity for hiding anything glittering, such as silver forks or spoons. They are generally fed on fragments of meat and bones, and on bread steeped in water or milk; but they cannot be kept in a healthy state without animal food, as naturally they are decidedly carnivorous.

THE STARLING is another British talking bird, and in confinement it is very similar in its habits to the raven. "There is not a bird in all Great Britain," observes Mr. Waterton, "more harmless than the starling: still it has to suffer persecution, and is too often doomed to see its numbers thinned by the hand of wantonness or error. The farmer complains that it sucks his pigeons' eggs; and, when the gunner and his assembled party wish to try their new percussion locks, the keeper is ordered to close the holes of entrance into the dove-cot over night; and the next morning three or four dozen starlings are captured to be shot; while the keeper, that slave of Nimrod, receives thanks, and often a boon, from the surrounding sportsmen, for having freed the dove-cot from such a pest. Alas! these poor starlings had merely resorted to it for shelter and protection, and were in no way responsible for the fragments of egg-shells which were strewed upon the floor. These fragments were the work of deep designing knaves, and not of the harmless starling.

The rat and the weasel were the real destroyers; but they had done the deed of mischief in the dark, unseen and unsuspected; while the stranger starlings were taken, condemned, and executed, for having been found in a place built for other tenants of a more profitable description. After the closest examination of the form and economy of the starling, you will be at a loss to produce proof of its being an egg-sucker. If it really sucks the eggs of pigeons, it would equally suck the eggs of other birds; and, those eggs not being concealed in the dark recesses of the pigeon-cot, but exposed in open nests on the ground, and often in the leafless bushes of the hedge, this fact would afford to the inquisitive naturalist innumerable opportunities of detecting the bird in its depredations. Now, who has ever seen the starling in the absolute act of plundering a nest? It builds its nest here,* in company with the ringdove, the robin, the greenfinch, the wagtail, the jackdaw, the chaffinch, and the owl, but it never touches their eggs. Indeed, if it were in the habit of annoying its immediate neighbours, upon so tender a point as that of sucking their eggs, there would soon be hue and cry against it; nor would the uproar cease until the victor had driven away the vanquished. So

* [At Walton Hall.]

certain am I that the starling never sucks the eggs of other birds, that, when I see him approach the dove-cot, I often say to him 'go in, poor bird, and take thy rest in peace. Not a servant of mine shall surprise thee, or hurt a feather of thy head. Thou dost not come for eggs, but for protection; and this most freely I will give to thee. I will be thy friend in spite of all the world has said against thee; and here, at least, thou shalt find a place of safety for thyself and little ones. Thy innocence and usefulness demand this at my hands.'"

With regard to its habits, "the starling is gregarious; and I am satisfied in my own mind that the congregated masses of this bird are only dissolved at the vernal equinox, because they have not sufficient opportunities afforded them of places wherein to build their nests. If those opportunities were offered them, we should see them breeding here in multitudes as numerous as the rook. They require a place for their nest well protected from the external air. The inside of the roof of a house, a deep hole in a tower, or in the decayed trunk or branch of a tree, are places admirably adapted for the incubation of the starling; and he will always resort to them, provided he be unmolested. The same may be said of the jackdaw."

In a state of confinement the starling may be fed on soaked bread, and cheese cut very small. It should also have insects given to it, or, where this is not practicable, meat cut into very small pieces; and it should have a constant supply of fresh water, as it is very fond of bathing, which, indeed, is requisite to keep it in health, and it will not use dirty water.

THE MAGPIE is very similar in its habits to the starling and the raven, but it prefers cooked meat to any other food; and it may be easily taught to return to its cage when it has been let out for exercise. It may also be taught to know its name, and to come and rub itself against its master or mistress when told to do so.

"This beautiful frequenter of our woods and plains," says Mr. Waterton, "was notorious two thousand years ago for pertness of character and volubility of tongue. Ovid, who knew more of birds than any man of his time, gives us an account of a family of young ladies in Macedonia, who were all changed into magpies; and he expressly tells us, that they retained their inordinate fondness for gabble long after they had lost the lovely form of woman.

'And still their tongues went on, though changed to birds,
In endless clack, and vast desire of words.'"

"I love in my heart to see a magpie," he then continues, "for it always puts me in mind of the tropics. There is such a rich glow of colour, and such a metallic splendour of plumage in this bird, that one would almost be apt to imagine it must have found its way here from the blazing latitudes of the south. I am fully aware that it has propensities of a sufficiently predatory nature to bring it into general disrepute with civilized man; but let us remember that, like the carrion crow, it only exercises them to any serious extent for about two months in the spring of the year. At that season, it certainly commences operations with surprising assiduity. Cacus himself, that ancient thief, when he was about to steal the cows of Hercules, never exhibited greater cunning than that which this bird puts in practice after it has discovered a hen's nest in the yard, or a place of sitting game in the field. Both the magpie and the carrion crow transfix the eggs with their beaks, and then convey them through the air. After the season of incubation is over, the magpie becomes a harmless bird (unless the pilfering of a little unprotected fruit be considered a crime), and spends the remainder of the year in works of great utility to man, by destroying millions of insects, and by preventing the air from being infected with the noxious effluvium

arising from the scourings of slaughter-houses. The cattle, too, are in some degree benefited by the prying researches of this sprightly bird. At a certain time of the year, it is often seen on the backs of sheep and oxen, freeing them from vermin, which must be exceedingly troublesome to them. In Demerara, where the magpie does not exist, this friendly office is performed by a hawk."

Magpies are very social birds; and in places where they are beyond the reach of molestation, it has been observed that they are often seen "in little parties of from fifteen to twenty together, flitting from tree to tree in noisy conversation." They are particularly "vociferous at the approach of night; and he who loves to watch the movements of animated nature, may observe them in small detached companies, proceeding to their wonted roosting-places, in some wood of spruce, pine, or larch, which they seem to prefer to any other. There they become valuable watchmen for the night. Whoever enters the grove is sure to attract their especial notice, and then their chattering is incessant."

In the very interesting work on the *History of Birds*, written by the late Bishop of Norwich, some curious particulars are related of the sagacity shown by a pair of magpies that had built their nest in a gooseberry bush, there being no trees in the neighbour-

hood of a sufficient size. They seemed to be perfectly aware of the dangers they were exposed to; "and that foxes, cats, hawks, &c., might not interrupt them, they had barricaded not only the nest, but the bush itself all round with briars and thorns, in a formidable manner. The materials in the inside of the nest were soft, warm, and comfortable to the touch; but all round, on the outside, so rough, strong, and firmly entwined with the bush, that, without a hedge-knife, or something of the kind, even a man could not, without much pain and trouble, get at their young, the barrier from the outer to the inner edge being above a foot in breadth. Frogs, mice, worms, or anything living, were plentifully brought to their young. One day, one of the parent birds attacked a rat; but not being able to kill it, one of the young ones came out of the nest and assisted in its destruction, which was not finally accomplished till the other old one, arriving with a dead mouse, also lent its aid. The female was observed to be the most active and thievish, and withal very ungrateful; for although the children about the house had often frightened cats and hawks from the spot, yet she one day seized a chicken, and carried it to the top of the house to eat it, where the hen immediately followed, and having rescued the chicken, brought it safely

down in her beak; and it was remarked that the poor little bird, though it made a great noise while the magpie was carrying it up, was quite quiet, and seemed to feel no pain, while its mother was carrying it down. These magpies were supposed to have been the very same pair which had built there for several years, never suffering either the young, when grown up, or anything else, to take possession of their bush. The nest they carefully fortified afresh every spring with rough, strong, prickly sticks, which they sometimes drew in with their united forces, if unable to effect the object alone. To this tameness and familiarity the magpie will sometimes add a considerable degree of courage, and not satisfied with driving away intruders from its premises, has been known to attack animals much its superior in size. One of them was seen pursuing a full-grown hare, making frequent and furious pounces upon it, from which the animal at last escaped only by making for a thick hedge, at the other side of which it ran off to some distance from the place where it had entered, without being observed by its pursuer. No cause could be assigned for this assault."

When it is wished to have magpies perfectly tame, the young birds should be taken from the nest when only about a fortnight old; and when

sufficiently fledged they may be allowed to fly to a neighbouring bush or low tree, enticing them back to their cage by putting food in it; and if this be repeated every day till they are fully fledged (when the pinion-feathers may be slightly clipped), they will become familiar with their home, and may be suffered to enjoy a few hours of liberty every day, without being in any danger of being lost. Magpies are very affectionate birds, and will soon learn to caress those who are kind to them. A magpie will follow his mistress about, rubbing himself against her till he is stroked, and doing everything in his power to return her caresses. The magpie may be easily taught to imitate musical sounds, and to speak several words with tolerable distinctness.

The JAY is exceedingly beautiful, but it is by no means so clever, or so teachable as any of the other British talking birds. If, however, it be caught young, it may be taught to utter a few words, and to imitate various sounds, which it does with great exactness. It will also occasionally in Spring utter a kind of sound, though in so low a tone as scarcely to be heard. The young birds are born blind, and the parent bird watches constantly over them till they can see, so that it is very difficult for bird-catchers to take them for some days after they are

hatched. The jay, unlike most of the other birds belonging to the same family, appears to prefer fruit and grain to animal food, though it requires a certain proportion of the latter to keep it in health. It is almost impossible to tame the jay unless it is taken very young, as it is naturally a very shy bird. Young jays should be reared on curds, biscuit, crumbs of bread, and meat cut very small. The jay should be allowed plenty of water, not only for drinking, but for bathing.

The JACKDAW can hardly be classed among the talking birds, as it is very difficult to teach it to articulate any words. It is, however, easily taught to know its name, and to come when called. It also soon learns to know the dinner-bell, or any other sound which it is accustomed to hear and to associate with the time of feeding. Jackdaws are said to be very affectionate to each other, and to remain in pairs during the whole year. They feed upon vegetable substances as well as animal food; and in a cage they may be fed principally upon bread.

All the British talking birds are very subject to diseases if kept in a cage. In some cases they become extremely thin, and the feathers look rough, and disarranged. The remedy for this disease is, to give some preparation of steel, and the most simple

manner of doing this is to put a rusty nail in the water given to the bird. A spider is also said to be efficacious; and the bird should have abundance of fresh air, and as much liberty as can be safely given to it. Sometimes merely removing it to a larger cage will have a great effect in checking the progress of the disease.

The pip is, in fact, a cold in the head, and it may be detected by the bird frequently opening its beak as though it had a difficulty in breathing. In this disease the beak itself is generally yellowish, and the tongue is dry and hard. Sometimes a loose skin appears on the tongue, which should be removed, peeling it off from the hinder part first. A small feather may be drawn through the orifices of the nose to remove the stoppage, and a pill consisting of butter with a little garlic may be given.

Diarrhœa is another complaint to which birds are subject; and while suffering from it they should be fed upon soaked bread and boiled Indian corn, from which the water has been strained off, and which should have the water in which lettuce seed has been boiled put to it. Should the disease continue, the yolk of a hard-boiled egg may be given, and the birds should not be suffered to touch any kind of fruit.

Birds are very subject to diseased eyes, and in this case, the eyes should be washed with a lotion

made by pouring boiling water over the bruised or scraped root of the white hellebore. The juice of the red beet may be given to the birds to drink.

Moulting is, however, the most serious evil that attends cage birds, as they are frequently deficient in strength to cast off their old feathers, and to form new ones. Moulting also occurs every year, and generally lasts about three months; and should the bird appear ill, a small piece of stick-liquorice should be placed in the water every other day; and soaked captain's biscuit, with a little cayenne pepper should be given about three times a week.

Birds are frequently infested with vermin, which are found in most abundance beneath the wings, and they are best destroyed by washing the bird in tobacco water. After this operation, the bird should be removed to another cage, and the crevices of the old cage should be thoroughly washed with spirits of turpentine or linseed oil.

CHAPTER X.

SINGING BIRDS.

THE principal singing birds which are kept in cages are the canary, the nightingale, the linnet, the blackbird, the thrush, and the bullfinch and the goldfinch.

The CANARY is the most common of these, as it is never found in this country except in a state of confinement, and it breeds readily in a cage. The best canaries are of a bright yellow, with a few jet-black spots; but others are pure yellow, whitish, or mottled. In selecting a canary, it is best to choose a bold and vigorous looking bird.

The best food for the canary is what is called German paste, composed of bread and barley-meal in the following manner: take the crumb of stale well-baked white bread, and having soaked it in clean water for about half an hour, squeeze out the mixture, and add to the bread two thirds of the same quantity of well-sifted barley-meal. Then pour

boiling milk over the mixture, and stir it well together. Crushed hemp seed is, however, the favourite food of canaries, but they should not have too great a quantity given to them at once. When the paste is given to them, it should be made fresh every other day. Where this is found troublesome, a substitute may be found by taking the crumb of stale white bread, and after drying it in an oven, pounding it in a mortar. The powder formed in this manner will keep good for several months, and every day a tea-spoonful may be given to each bird with as much cold or luke-warm milk as will form it into a stiff paste. This paste should be chopped very small on a board before the birds are suffered to eat it. If too much hemp seed is given, it will produce asthma. Sand should be put at the bottom of the cages of all birds, and they should occasionally be fed with chickweed, and other similar food. Great care, however, should be taken not to give too much, as canaries are very subject to a kind of surfeit, which is very often fatal. When a bird has this disease, if the feathers on the lower part of the body are blown aside, the body will be found swelled, and covered with little red veins. To cure this malady, the birds should have oatmeal mixed with their food for two or three days, and a little saffron put in their water. If the feathers on the head fall

off, and any watery eruptions should appear, the head should be washed every day with spring water, in which a little salt has been dissolved, wiping the head afterwards quite dry, and anointing the skin with a little palm oil. The bird should be kept warm, and a little ground rice may be given to it, boiled in milk with a little stick-liquorice.

The yellow scab is another disease which attacks the head and eyes of the canary, but it may be cured by anointing the part with fresh butter or lard. Canaries often suffer a great deal when they are moulting, and they should be kept warm at that season, the cage being set in the sun when it shines powerfully, and carefully shielded from cold winds. The bird should be fed with nourishing food, such as Naples biscuits, bread, and the yolks of hard eggs chopped small. It may also have scalded or bruised hemp seed, mixed with lettuce and maw seed. Saffron or stick-liquorice may be put into the water when the weather is hot.

Canaries may be taught to sit upon the hand or shoulder, and to fly about the room. The mode of teaching requires great patience: at first the cage door is left a little open when there is no one in the room, and a little hemp seed is scattered on the table, the water being left in the cage. The bird will hop out and take the hemp seed, and then re-

turn to the cage to drink. Another day, the same process is repeated with the mistress of the bird in the room. Afterwards, the feeding is repeated, the hemp seed being put nearer the lady who is seated in the room. The next day she may be seated at the table; and at last the hemp seed may be laid upon her lap, where the bird will, by this time, probably venture to take it if the lady is careful not to move her hands. In this manner, a bird may be taught to feed upon the lap of its mistress, whose only care should be to remain as quiet as possible, as the bird is sure to take fright if it sees the hand move. This mode of taming birds was told to me by a lady (a celebrated authoress) who had often practised it, and who concluded by adding, the true way of teaching birds is to let them teach themselves.

Canaries may also be taught to fetch and carry, and to whistle a variety of tunes, the latter being taught by playing the tunes repeatedly over on a bird organ or flute. In some cases canary birds have been taught to pronounce distinctly some short words; and a curious bird of this kind is described by Mr. Yarrell, as having been in the possession of a lady residing at the west end of London a few years since. Canaries will also imitate the singing of the nightingale and other birds if kept in the same

room. Some canaries sing at night; but it is said that this accomplishment is acquired by keeping the cages covered all day, and thus forcing the birds to live in constant darkness.

A canary, a goldfinch, and some other birds were exhibited in the summer of 1850 in London by Madlle. Vandermeersch. These birds were kept in a cage divided into four compartments, in each of which was a bird. The cage was placed upon a table, and in front of it was put a little trough, in which were arranged from a hundred to two hundred cards, each of which was inscribed with a word, a letter, or a number. Madlle. Vandermeersch first asked some gentleman of the company to tell her the time by his watch, or he might whisper any word he thought fit. She then approached the cage and spoke to one of her birds aloud, telling it to show what had been whispered to her, and at the same time opening the door of its division of the cage. The little bird hopped gravely out, and jumped upon the edge of the trough, examining the cards, and apparently deliberating which to choose. At length it fixed on one, which, with an immense exertion, it pulled out from the pack, and which contained the word required. The bird tossed the card down with great dignity, and then hopped back to its cage. If by any chance it turned the

card with its face downwards, its mistress made it turn back and place it properly. In some cases the birds spelt words, but it was observed that they could not spell any word in which the same letter was repeated twice.

THE NIGHTINGALE is generally allowed to sing more exquisitely than any other bird; and certainly the strength, compass, flexibility, variety, and harmony of its song are truly wonderful. Some of its cadences are so distinct that they have received separate names, such as jug, pipe-rattle, water-bubble, skeg, and whitlow. In short, twenty four quite distinct strains have been noticed in the song of a fine nightingale, besides innumerable variations. The bird has, in particular, a low shake, which is exceedingly beautiful. It is generally supposed by persons unacquainted with the nightingale, that it sings only during the night, but this is not the case; and, indeed, some birds never sing at all in the night. Bechstein divides the nightingales into the nocturnal and the diurnal.

The nightingale being a bird that does not naturally feed on grain, should have very little bread given to it. Fresh ants' eggs, or meal-worms, are considered its best food; but when these cannot be obtained, it may be fed with small caterpillars, or fresh lean meat cut very fine. It will, however, eat

any kind of insect, but soaked bread and hard eggs are sure to be injurious to it, unless given in very small quantities. The nightingale is not fond of any vegetable food, but a little grated carrot, and a few dried elder-berries, may be given to it occasionally. The cage in which the nightingale is kept must be well supplied with fresh water every day, both for bathing and drinking.

The nightingale suffers considerably at the period of moulting. It will rest for some hours with its head beneath its wing, its eyes half-closed, and its feathers ruffled up. When these symptoms are observed in a nightingale, a spider or two should be given to it; and enough saffron should be steeped in its water to make it a deep orange colour. The bird is also liable to the cramp, and other diseases arising from cold, damp, and a want of cleanliness. Sometimes it becomes very thin suddenly. In both cases it is as well to give it some spiders, two or three a day; and in the case of extreme thinness, a rusty nail may be put in the water which the bird has to drink, to operate as a tonic.

Various kinds of LARKS are kept in cages; though it appears very cruel to confine birds which, in a state of nature, delight in soaring as high as they possibly can, before they begin to sing. The SKY-LARK, in a state of nature, never sings on the

ground, and even in a cage, the poor bird generally attempts to rise as far as the wires will permit him, before he begins to sing. The skylark is generally kept in a large cage, and is supplied with a turf of fresh grass three times a week. It also should have chopped hay, or coarse bran, at the bottom of the cage, when young, or dry gravel (for full-grown birds), which should be changed every day. The food of this bird should be crumbs of bread, eggs boiled hard and chopped small, and hemp seed, which should be slightly bruised if the birds are young; the birds should also have, occasionally, a little fresh lean meat, cut very small. The skylark is a very hardy bird, but it is sometimes affected with a kind of diarrhœa, in which case it should have a little old cheese grated amongst its food; and it may have a few wood-lice, and a spider or two given to it, with a little saffron in its water. It is an imitative bird, and will copy the song of any other bird that happens to be near.

The WOOD-LARK is rather smaller than the skylark, which it resembles in form and habits. It is really cruel to keep these poor birds in a cage, as, in a wild state, they like to sing flying, and to remain stationary, with their wings and tail expanded, at a considerable height in the air, while they warble forth their songs.

The TIT-LARK, or PIPIT, is not properly a lark, though it is generally classed with those birds from the resemblance in its habits. The meadow-pipit is remarkable for the sweetness of its song. It is a very delicate bird, and requires to be fed like the nightingale.

The LINNET is much more suitable for a cage bird, and, with care, will live in confinement for many years. Linnets are fond of all kinds of seeds, particularly lettuce seed, and occasionally a little poppy seed. Care must be taken, however, not to feed them too much, as they are apt to die from over fatness. When linnets have been fed too much, they have sometimes a swelling under the tail, which, when ripe, should be pricked with a needle, and the matter let out. The part should afterwards be anointed with fresh butter, and the bird fed on lettuce seed and leaves, and melon seeds chopped small. A little saffron should also be put into the water. Linnets are frequently affected with diarrhœa, for which the same remedies are given. The linnet sings all the year round, except when moulting, and it readily acquires the song of any other bird. It should be kept in a large square cage, as when the cage is small and rounded at the top, the bird is apt to be affected with giddiness. The

linnet should have a sufficient quantity of water for bathing given to it every morning.

The GOLDFINCH is a remarkably healthy bird, and it has rarely anything the matter with it, except from over feeding. Too much hemp seed will occasion epilepsy, and the remedy is making it partially abstain from food. If the bird should be affected with diarrhœa, some dry chalk should be crumbled among its food. "The goldfinch," says the author of the *Boy's Own Book*, "is a gentle, tractable bird, and easily acquires the notes of other birds; but the feats it may be taught to perform are wonderful. Some years ago, a foreigner, named Roman, exhibited his birds, which went through a species of dramatic performance, in the course of which, one of them marched with a cap on its head, a firelock on its shoulder, and a match in its claw, and discharged a small cannon. It also stood amidst fireworks without exhibiting any fear. The goldfinch may be readily taught to draw up its food and water in an ivory bucket, by means of a chain. To accomplish this, a soft leather belt is provided, with four holes, through which the wings and feet are passed. The two ends of this belt meet a little below the breast, and are held together by a ring; to this a light slender chain is attached, to each end of which is fastened a bucket. The cage has no

wires, and merely consists of a back board, a bottom board, and a piece of cane, bent round and fastened midway to the back, for a perch. At the outer edge of the bottom board is fastened a ring, through which passes the chain already described. When the bird wants food or water, it draws up the chain with its beak, fixing it at intervals with its feet, till it has brought the bucket within its reach. If the buckets are suspended to a pulley, raising one makes the other descend, and the bird thus helps itself to its food and water alternately. At the back of the cage is a small mirror, in which it takes great pleasure in viewing itself."

The goldfinch is a most affectionate little creature, and the translator of Bechstein's work on *Cage Birds*, informs us that a lady "had one that never saw her depart without making every effort to quit his cage and follow her; her return was welcomed with every mark of delight; she approached—a thousand winning gestures testified his pleasure; she presented her finger, and it was caressed with low and joyous murmurs. This attachment," continues the narrator, "was so exclusive, that, if his mistress, to prove it, substituted another person's finger for her own, he would peck it sharply, whilst one of his mistress's, placed between two of this person's, would be immediately distinguished and caressed."

The CHAFFINCH is a common English bird, which may be often heard singing in this country in spring and early summer, but rarely prolonging its song to a later period. In a letter received from Mr. Waterton, dated December 15th, 1849, he says: "I intended to have written you a line or two on the chaffinch. Never, in all my life, have I heard this little favourite prolonging his song past mid July, till the present year; when, on Saturday morning, at half past nine on the 30th of November, I heard the full song-notes of a chaffinch often repeated. It was sitting on a lower branch of one of the large sycamore trees close to the house.* I had a full view of the bird, and its notes were as sweet and as distinct as though it had been warbling in the month of May. The morning was calm and sunny, but there had been a keen hoar-frost during the night. You will say, with the Spanish proverb, that one swallow does not make summer:—'Una golondrina no hace verano.'"

Mr. Broderip says, that the song of the chaffinch "seems as much neglected in England as it is worshipped on the Continent. Not that there are no instances of its melody being prized with us, and, indeed, as much as five guineas have been given for one with an uncommon note; but with

[* Walton Hall.]

the Thuringian, the admiration of the chaffinch's song becomes a passion. He will travel miles if he hear of the arrival of a wild one with a good note from a neighbouring country, and will sell his cow to possess it. He has created a set of terms to designate the eight different 'songs' which his ear has detected, and, when he obtains a bird that sings the best of these in perfection, hardly any price will tempt him to part with it. To procure a good chaffinch, a common workman will deprive himself almost of necessaries till he has saved the money which is to make him happy by the possession of his favourite songster. The Thuringian *Fanatico* carries his admiration to an excess that would be incredible if Bechstein had not given the details with a most amusing fidelity, describing at length all the songs, from the *Double Trill of the Hartz*, the *Reiterzong*, and the *Wine-song*, to the *Pithia* or *Trewethia*. To his interesting and well-translated book we refer those who are curious in tracing such phenomena of the human mind: the passion for the rare varieties of the chaffinch's song appears to be, with reference to the ear, what the Tulip mania was, and, indeed, in a great measure, is, with regard to the eye."

"Sad and mournful," says Mr. Waterton, "is the fate which awaits this harmless songster in Belgium

and in Holland, and in other kingdoms of the continent. In your visit to the towns in these countries, you see it outside the window, a lonely prisoner in a wooden cage, which is scarcely large enough to allow it to turn round upon its perch. It no longer enjoys the light of day. Its eyes have been seared with a red-hot iron, in order to increase its powers of song, which, unfortunately for the cause of humanity, are supposed to be heightened and prolonged far beyond their ordinary duration by this barbarous process. Poor chaffinches! poor choristers! poor little sufferers! My heart aches as I pass along the streets, and listen to your plaintive notes. At all hours of the day, we may hear these hapless captives singing (as far as we can judge) in apparent ecstasy. I would fain hope that these pretty prisoners, so woebegone, and so steeped in sorrow, to the eye of him who knows their sad story, may have no recollection of those days when they poured forth their wild notes in the woods, free as air, 'the happiest of the happy.' Did they remember the hour when the hand of man so cruelly deprived them both of liberty and eyesight, we should say that they would pine in anguish, and sink down at last, a certain prey to grief and melancholy. At Aix la Chapelle may be seen a dozen or fourteen of these blind songsters,

hung out in cages at a public house, not far from the cathedral. They sing incessantly, for months after those in liberty have ceased to warble; and they seem to vie with each other, which can carol in the loudest strain. There is something in song so closely connected with the overflowings of a joyous heart, that when we hear it we immediately fancy we can see both mirth and pleasure joining in the party. Would, indeed, that both of these were the constant attendants on this much-to-be-pitied group of captive choristers! How the song of birds is involved in mystery! mystery probably never to be explained. Whilst sauntering up and down the Continent in the blooming month of May we hear the frequent warbling of the chaffinch; and then we fancy that he is singing solely to beguile the incubation of his female, sitting on her nest in a bush close at hand. But, on returning to the town, we notice another little chaffinch, often in some wretched alley, a prisoner with the loss of both its eyes, and singing nevertheless as though its little throat would burst. Does this blind captive pour forth its melody in order to soothe its sorrows? Has Omnipotence kindly endowed the chaffinch with vocal faculties, which at one time may be employed to support it in distress, and at another time to add to its social enjoyments? What answer shall we make? We

know not what to say. But, be it as it will, I would not put out the eyes of the poor chaffinch, though by doing so I might render its melody ten times sweeter than that of the sweet nightingale itself. O that the Potentate, in whose dominions this little bird is doomed to such a cruel fate, would pass an edict to forbid the perpetration of the barbarous deed! Then would I exclaim, O king of men, thy act is worthy of a royal heart! That kind Being, who is a friend to the friendless, shall recompense thee for this."

Happily in this country the same cruelty is not practised, and the chaffinch here has only to mourn the loss of its liberty. Those kept in confinement in this country, it is stated in the *Boy's Own Book*, are generally caught in June and July by placing twigs covered with birdlime in places where they come to drink. "Those which are caught in Essex are esteemed the best. Being an exceedingly jealous bird, it may also be easily caught thus: fasten a soft leather belt round the body of a male chaffinch, and attach to it a string, a foot long, the other end of which is tied to a peg in the ground. Surround him, just beyond his limits, with a circle of limed twigs, and conceal, in a cage, under a hedge, close to the spot, a chaffinch that sings his natural song. When he begins to sing, the wild

one will dart down upon the tied bird, which he will mistake for the other, and be caught by the limed twigs."

The natural food of this bird in summer is insects, and in winter seeds and grain. In confinement it may be fed upon rape seed soaked in water the previous day, with occasionally a very little hemp seed, green chickweed and plantain, with occasionally a little lettuce leaf, or a slice of apple. It should also have meal-worms and ants' eggs, and occasionally a little meat cut very small. Chaffinches are generally very ill at the moulting season, and frequently die. The bird at this season should be well fed with insects, meat cut very small, and bread boiled in milk. Its other diseases are generally cured by saffron or a rusty nail being put into its water. It should at all times be supplied with a large bathing pan, the water in which should be changed every day. The feet of this bird frequently become swelled and covered with scales, which should be removed with a very sharp knife, and if the feet become sore, they should be anointed with fresh lard or butter.

The BULLFINCH is one of the few birds that can be induced to learn a tune which may be reduced to the form of musical notation. Birds of this kind learn so very slowly that it will take nine months of

regular and continued instruction to make the bird perfect in its lesson; and even then, if it should suffer very much at the moulting season, it frequently forgets all that it has learnt. When properly taught, piping bullfinches fetch very high prices; and, accordingly, the teaching of them has become quite a trade in Germany. "In the month of June," says Dr. Stanley (the late Bishop of Norwich), "the young ones, which are sought for in the nests of wild birds, are taken when about ten days old, and brought up by a person who, by care and attention, so completely tames them that they become perfectly docile and obedient. At the expiration of about a couple of months they first begin to whistle, from which time their education begins; and no school can be more diligently superintended by its master, and no scholars more effectually trained to their own calling, than a seminary of bullfinches. They are formed first into classes of about six in each; and after having been kept a longer time than usual without food, and confined in a dark room, the tune they are to learn is played over and over again on a little instrument called a bird-organ, the notes of which resemble as nearly as possible those of the bullfinch. For a time, perhaps, the moping birds will sit in silence, not knowing what to make of these proceedings, but after a while

they will one by one begin to imitate the notes they hear. As soon as they do this, light is admitted into the room, and they are allowed a small supply of food. By degress the sound of the organ, and the circumstance of being fed, become so associated, that the hungry bird is sure to imitate the notes as soon as it hears them. They are then turned over to the care of boys, whose sole business it is to go on with their education, each boy having a separate bird placed under his charge, who plays away from morning to night, or, at least, for as many hours as the birds can pay attention, during which time their first teacher or feeder goes his regular rounds, scolding or rewarding his feathered scholars, by signs and modes which he has taught them to understand, till they become so perfect, and the tune, whatever it may be, so imprinted on their memory, that they will pipe it for the remainder of their lives. But though the greater number may be taught their tune, few only, not above five in a hundred, possibly can be so correctly taught as to pipe in perfect harmony; and these, of course, fetch a much higher price than the rest. Whether from the early habit of associating the utterance of their notes with the agreeable addition of a meal," continues Dr. Stanley, "or from some particular pleasure they feel in singing, we know not, but it so happens that

singing and satisfaction generally go together in bullfinches; for a bird attached to any particular individuals in a family, will always express delight when they approach, and greet them with his well-known air, hopping towards them on his perch, and practising all his little coaxing ways. An interesting story was once told by Sir William Parsons, who was himself a great musician, and who, when a young man, possessed a piping bullfinch, which he had taught to sing 'God save the King.' On his going abroad, he gave his favourite in charge to a sister, with a strict injunction to take the greatest care of it. On his return, one of his first visits was to her, when she told him that the poor little bird had been long in declining health, and was at that moment very ill. Sir William, full of sorrow, went into the room where the cage was, and, opening the door, put in his hand and spoke to the bird. The bird remembered his voice, opened its eyes, shook its feathers, staggered on to his finger, piped 'God save the King,' and fell dead!"

Some of the most accomplished of these birds will sing five or six airs, or more, correctly; but they seldom can remember more than ten, and even when they know that number, they will appear sometimes to forget the tune they are singing, and will stop short in the middle of it. They are taught to sing

with a bird-organ, or flageolet, which is played to them repeatedly while they are kept in a dark room; and some birds require the same tune to be repeated incessantly for several months, though others will learn with the greatest rapidity. The natural note of the bullfinch is harsh and discordant.

The bullfinch is a pretty little bird; and it is very hardy in confinement. It may, like the chaffinch, be fed with rape seed, soaked in water the previous day; and it should have green meat occasionally, such as lettuce leaves, chickweed, and plantain. These birds are very fond of hemp seed, but it stimulates them so much that they should only have a little at a time. A great number of piping bullfinches are brought every year from Germany.

The BLACKBIRD and the THRUSH may be easily taught to sing different tunes, and they are both very hardy in confinement. They should both have plenty of water to wash themselves in, as well as to drink; and as their feet are liable to become incrusted with dirt, they should be frequently examined, and soaked in warm water when necessary. Their natural food is, insects, berries, caterpillars, and snails, of which last they are very fond. In a state of confinement, they must have lean fresh meat cut very small, and mixed with bread, and occasionally a kind of German paste made of the crust of

bread soaked in water for about half an hour, then squeezed dry and put into a stone mortar with some arrot finely grated, and a few spoonfuls of fine barley or wheat meal. When meat is given to birds, great care should be taken to cut it very small, and to have all the particles quite distinct, as, if this is not the case, the bird is very apt to get the pieces of meat twisted round its beak, and if not relieved, it will very soon be choked.

There are several different kinds of thrush, seven of which are natives of England, viz. the missel thrush or storm-cock, the fieldfare, the song thrush, the redwing, the ring-ousel, the blackbird, and the water-ousel or dipper. Of these, the redwing and the fieldfare are only birds of passage; and, indeed, only the missel thrush, the song thrush, and the blackbird are valued for their singing. "The missel thrush," says the late Dr. Stanley, "is not only the largest, but the finest and boldest of the family, and has some claims to our esteem, from its being the earliest song-bird of the year; often favouring us with its notes at a season when every other bird slinks away to its hiding place, glad to escape the inclemency of the weather. In the height of a heavy gale of wind, the missel thrush may be seen braving the blast, perched on the quivering branch of some tall tree; hence it has gained the name of

the storm-cock. It is, moreover, a gallant bird; and, during the breeding season, woe be to the jackdaw or magpie that ventures to cast a wistful eye at its eggs: nay, more, we have known it attack even a hawk, and fairly drive him from the neighbourhood."

"The storm-cock," observes Mr. Waterton, "warbles nearly the year throughout. I have often heard him pour forth his wild and plaintive notes in the months of August, October, November, and December, and in every following month, until the sun has entered into Cancer, at which period he seems to unstring his lyre for a few weeks. Towards the close of December, his song is particularly charming; and it becomes more frequent as the new year advances. I remember well (indeed, I noted down the circumstance), that, on December the 21st, 1827, his carol was remarkably attractive. He warbled incessantly from the top of a lofty elm, just as the poor from a neighbouring village were receiving corn under it, in memory of St. Thomas the Apostle."

"During the period of the breeding season," continues the same author, "the habits of the storm-cock undergo a noted change. At other times of the year, except in cherry-time, and when the seeds of the different species of the service-tree are ripe, this bird carefully avoids the haunts of man; but no

sooner does the time arrive in which it has to make its nest, than it draws near to our habitations with the utmost confidence, and forms its nest in places the most exposed to our view. There, both male and female protect their charge with matchless courage. On the approach of an enemy, you immediately hear their singular cry, which somewhat resembles the sound produced by striking the teeth of a comb smartly with your finger; and you see the parent birds dashing incessantly at the crow, the cat, or the magpie, until they clear the coast. One year there was a storm-cock's nest within fifteen yards of the place where the masons were at work. Our tame magpie, which was allowed its freedom and the use of its wings, seized the female, and brought her close to the masons. The male bird instantly came up, and rescued his mate by fighting the magpie, until he made it let go its hold. It was to save his female that he advanced so undauntedly into the midst of his mortal enemies: nothing else could have induced him to face the danger. I could fancy that I heard him say, 'If you won't give my poor dear up to me, here I stay: you may kill us both.' This loving couple retired triumphant to their nest; but the female lost half of her tail in the fray."

The common Song Thrush, or Throstle, is particu-

larly fond of snails, the shells of which it breaks by a sharp knock against any hard substance which happens to be in its way. A story is related in the *Magazine of Natural History*, of a lady who had a tame thrush, which she permitted to fly about her room; and one day this thrush took up a pincushion made in a shell, which it struck with such force against a book-case, as to break off a splinter of the wood,—the poor bird, no doubt, fancying that there was a snail or some other molluscous animal in the shell. "Thrushes," observes the Rev. Leonard Jenyns, "live much on snails during the summer, especially in dry weather. They appear to resort to particular spots and favourite stones for breaking the shells of these animals. There are two or three such spots in my garden, which are very much visited for this purpose, and where the shelly fragments of the common snail may be found in some seasons accumulated by handfuls. It is very amusing to watch the thrush holding the snail in its bill, and forcibly knocking it against a stone, in order to get at the contents of the shell. The rapping noise which it makes may be heard to a considerable distance, and I have often known persons puzzled at such times to know whence the noise proceeded. When disturbed during the operation, I have seen the bird fly off with its booty to another spot."

The BLACKBIRD very closely resembles the thrush in its habits, in a state of nature as well as in confinement. It appears, however, to be a more imitative bird, and, as Mr. Broderip remarks, "some of our readers may not be aware that, glorying in its prodigality of voice, and revelling in its mimicry, it has been known to crow like a cock, and cackle like a hen. The power and quality of tone of the blackbird is first-rate, and for these he is justly more celebrated than for execution or variety of notes. His clear, mellow, fluty pipe is first heard in the early spring, and his song is continued far into the year, till the time of moulting. He rejoices in the moist vernal weather, and is heard to the greatest advantage when

> 'The stealing shower is scarce to patter heard,
> By those who wander through the forest walks.'

The thickest bush is generally selected for the nest, which is matted externally with coarse roots, and strong dry grass stalks or bents, plastered and mixed internally with earth, so as to form a kind of cob-wall.—The fruit consumed by the blackbird and song-thrush," Mr. Broderip continues, "is well repaid, not only by their music, but by the good they do to the garden in destroying snails and slugs. Besides their natural notes, these birds may be educated so as to sing an artificial song, and even articulate. Dr.

Latham relates, that the tame blackbird may be taught to whistle tunes, and to imitate the human voice; and Pliny tells us of a talking thrush which was the pet of Claudius Cæsar's Agrippina."

The Rev. Leonard Jenyns also mentions the fondness of the blackbird for damp weather, and says that he observed, that "during the fine and very dry weather which prevailed over a great part of June, 1844, the blackbirds hardly sang at all; but when the rain came, in the last week of that month, they resumed, and continued to be heard till after the middle of the month following. July was even hotter than June, but then there was much more wet: this it was which seemed to make the difference. I also once noticed, quite late in the summer, and when no blackbirds had been heard for some time previous, that one evening, after the occurrence of a violent thunder-storm, several were heard singing, but for that evening only. The atmosphere at the time was calm, and the air mild, but extremely damp."

"Blackbirds, prior to roosting," Mr. Jenyns also observes, "are not only clamorous, but singularly restless. They fly about from bush to bush in a hurried and agitated manner, as if endeavouring to escape some bird of prey, or otherwise apprehensive of danger. Their note at such times is a kind of

twittering scream, different from what is usually heard at any other time of the day."

So much has been said about the ROBIN-REDBREAST that it seems scarcely possible to add anything new. Its tameness, or rather, perhaps, its boldness, its pugnacity, and the very odd situations it chooses for its nest, have been described repeatedly in various works on the habits of birds. Some very curious instances of the latter peculiarity, that is, the odd places the robin selects for its nest, are mentioned in Dr. Stanley's work; and in the Rev. Leonard Jenyns's *Observations in Natural History*, a curious story is told of a redbreast which had built in some ivy against a wall in a garden at Whitburn, near Sunderland, in April 1839. "The bird was sitting upon four eggs, when the gardener one day trimmed the ivy so close with his shears, as almost to destroy the nest; in consequence of which the eggs were precipitated to the ground. They lay there till observed by the lady of the house shortly afterwards, who was attracted to the spot by the plaintive cries of the parent bird. It was at first thought that to restore them to the nest would prove useless. The attempt, however, was made; the eggs, which were nearly cold were picked up and placed back again in the nest, after it had been repaired and put together again as well as was possible. They had

not been returned to their former situation five minutes, when the bird came, and again took charge of them, and in two days they were hatched; the infant brood being from that time, of course, objects of daily interest and observation. Great was the dismay of the lady, some days afterwards, at finding all the little ones upon the ground, stiff and cold, having fallen through a fracture in the patched nest, which was not sufficiently strong to keep together. She took them up, and perceiving a slight movement in one of them, carried them into the house, where, partly by the warmth of the hand, and partly by the influence of a fire to which they were held, they all gradually recovered. They were then again placed in the nest, which was further patched with a piece of drugget, fastened into the fracture through which they had fallen. They were doomed, however, to go through more trials; for it happened, some nights after, there was a heavy rain, which so completely soaked the nest, and the drugget which had been placed in it as a lining, that the young ones were found the following morning almost drowned, and to appearance lifeless. They were again brought to the fire, and thoroughly dried; after which they were placed in the empty nest of another bird that was substituted for the old one, and fixed in a currant bush, a few yards from the

wall where the ivy was. The young ones, which were half-fledged when they got this wetting, still continued to receive the attentions of their parent; and in due time they were all safely reared, and flew away. It is stated, that it was very curious to observe the familiarity of the old birds during the whole course of these proceedings: they always sat close by, and never seemed the least alarmed at the liberties taken with their progeny."

When the Robin-redbreast is kept in a cage, it requires to be very carefully tended, as it is very subject to cramp and giddiness, and if not properly watched over, it will sometimes fall in a kind of fit upon its back, and after struggling some time vainly to recover itself, it will die if not relieved. The remedy is generally to take it out of the cage, and to hold it in the warm hand, or to put it into a basket with wool near the fire. The robin-redbreast, though a native of England, cannot endure severe cold, and indeed, it is supposed that its tameness in venturing into the house in winter, and its building in places frequented by human beings, are both occasioned by its earnest desire for warmth and shelter. Redbreasts are often found in winter lying almost dead of cold upon the snow, and they may be revived by bringing them into the house, and keeping them warm.

The robin-redbreast is a bird that requires animal food; but it is rather more particular than some other insect-eating birds, as it very often will not touch hairy caterpillars, and it seems to possess the power of sending back from its stomach any food that it cannot digest. Thus, on the floor of the robin's cage will be found innumerable little pellets of half-digested food, which require to be cleared away every day; and unless scrupulous cleanliness is attended to, it is impossible to keep the bird in health. Redbreasts are very fond of meal-worms and earwigs.

The song of the robin is not powerful, and does not possess much variety; but it is generally sweet and melodious. Some birds bear confinement well, but others beat themselves against the wires of the cage; and when this last is the case, it is better to set the bird at liberty at once, as it is almost impossible to tame it.

The BLACKCAP is a very pretty little bird with a very sweet song, but its silky plumage is so frail and delicate, that it is rare to see one in confinement which has not either its tail or its wings disfigured. It is also impossible to keep it in health unless it is allowed to hop about and climb a perch furnished with several sticks; and in Bechstein's *Cage Birds* it is stated, that when its ordinary time

for departure arrives, the instinct which urges it to travel is so strong, that it becomes much agitated, particularly in the night by moonlight, and in some cases it has been known to fall ill and die. The Blackcap feeds partly on insects, and partly on fruit and grain; and in confinement it may be fed on the German paste, with a little bruised hempseed occasionally, varied by ants' eggs and insects of various kinds. The bird is very fond of elderberries, which may be dried for winter use, soaking them in water before they are given to the bird. It should be well supplied with water, both for washing and drinking. These birds are rather tender and easily affected by cold, but their song is very sweet, and bears considerable resemblance to that of the nightingale. They are also very affectionate little birds, and may be easily taught to caress those who feed them.

The FAUVETTE bears considerable resemblance to the blackcap, both in its habits and in its song. It is, however, more delicate, and is easily killed by cold. It is a great eater, and requires abundance of animal food as well as fruit and seeds. It must not, however, have too much paste or bread given to it, as over-feeding occasions the feathers to fall off, and then the poor little creature dies from cold.

CHAPTER XI.

DOVES AND PIGEONS.

Of these birds, doves are most properly to be called domestic pets, as they are always kept in cages; while pigeons are left in a state of half-liberty, only having a sleeping habitation provided for them, and being fed at regular times. Of the doves kept in cages the Turtle Dove is generally the favourite, not from any particular attractions in itself (for though it is a pretty little graceful bird, it is incapable of being taught any accomplishment, and its only attempt at singing is a melancholy cooing), but from its reported attachment to its mate, which is said to be so great that it would pine itself to death if its mate died before it. Unfortunately, however, this is one of those popular fallacies which, though they are generally believed, have no foundation in truth.

The turtle dove is naturally a very shy bird, but when it once becomes attached, it is extremely affec-

tionate, and will caress, with its beak, those who attend to it. In a wild state the seeds of the Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvéstris*) are said to be its principal food, but in confinement it will eat peas, vetches, millet, or corn of any kind. Like all other birds it is very fond of hemp seed, but it should only be allowed to take it in small quantities. The turtle dove is very sensitive to cold, and should be kept in a moderately warm room. The German peasants have a superstitious belief respecting these birds, and fancy that the people who keep them are never troubled with rheumatism; but this fancy does not hold good in other countries.

The COLLARED TURTLE DOVE is so called from the back of the neck being marked with a black crescent, the points of which nearly meet under the throat. The upper part of the body is of a reddish white; the legs are red, and the iris of the eye is of a golden yellow. This bird, being a native of India and China, is very tender, and requires to be kept in a warm room during the winter. The collared turtle is an engaging little bird which easily becomes affectionate to those who take care of it; and its cooing is like a faint laugh. The young birds are fed entirely by their parents, who disgorge their food for that purpose; and it is said to be a curious sight to watch their mode of feeding. "The old

bird," says the Rev. Leonard Jenyns, "opening its beak to the full extent, the young plunges its own almost, as it were, down the throat of its parent, whose efforts to regurgitate the required food into the mouth of its offspring are distinctly visible. But what particularly takes my attention is, the persevering and often fruitless endeavour made by the young to induce the parent to open its mouth for this purpose. This is especially the case when the young are now nearly fully fledged, and partially able to feed themselves; and when, perhaps, the usual secretions of the parent's crop are beginning to fail. Under such circumstances, they will often chase the old birds round the cage, and again and again present themselves before their face, as often as they turn away from their solicitations: at the same time they keep up a continual flapping with their wings, utter a plaintive whining note, and peck at the sides of their parents' bill, trying every stratagem to make them yield to their entreaties. The old birds, however, as if conscious that there was no supply, or that it was no longer needed, obstinately refuse to pay any regard to the demands made upon them; or they are not prevailed upon till after a long time, and till wearied, as it were, with the perpetual teasings of their offspring. The difficulty experienced by this last in effecting its object, is

greater as it advances to the age at which it is capable of taking care of itself. Probably the secretion in the parent's crop is dependent upon a certain degree of excitement caused by maternal affection; and, after a time, when this excitement wears off, by reason of the increasing age of the young bird, it is with difficulty elaborated. At length it ceases altogether; yet the habit of the young coming to its parent to be fed is kept up for a while, in like manner as we see nearly full-grown kittens and puppies still occasionally pulling at their mother's teats after they are dry. The scene above described may, at any time, be witnessed by throwing down a little hemp seed into the cage where the parents and young birds are, when, as soon as ever the former begin to feed, the latter will be immediately at them importuning for a share."

The RING-DOVE is a very pretty bird, and it is of a much hardier constitution than the turtle-dove. In a state of nature, it has been observed to resort principally to the turnip-fields for its subsistence; not, however, feeding on the tuberous root of the turnip, but on the leaves, which, Mr. Waterton tells us, it eats so voraciously, that towards evening its form becomes considerably changed. "Having fed on the turnip-tops during the course of the day,

its crop gets so distended with food, that it gives to the fore-part of the pigeon's body a very full appearance; and this is easily discerned as the bird passes over your head to its evening retreat. The contents of the stomach having been digested during the night, we observe that the body has regained its ordinary proportions at the break of day. There has been a great increase of ring-doves during the winter season, in this part of the country,* since the farmers have paid so much attention to the cultivation of turnips. On seeing the congregated numbers of these birds, one is led to imagine that there must be an annual influx of them, at the close of autumn, from some far distant part." Unfortunately, the ring-dove, "by not feeding on insects, renders no service to man while visiting his fields. On the contrary, it is known to injure him considerably in his crop of rising clover. As soon as this plant begins, under the influence of the vernal sun, to expand its leaves, the ring-dove attacks the heart-shoot with fatal severity; and much address is required on the part of the farmer to scare the birds from their favourite food."

"The ring-dove," this naturalist adds, "lays two snow-white eggs, on a nest which may be termed a platform of sticks, so sparingly put together, that

* [Yorkshire.]

the eggs are easily seen through it by an eye habituated to look for them. On inspecting this apparent commencement or remnant of a nest, one is led to surmise, at the first glance, that the young are necessarily exposed to many a cold and bitter blast during the spring of this ever-changing climate. 'But God tempers the wind,' said Maria, 'to the shorn lamb;' and in the case before us, instinct teaches the parent bird to sit upon its offspring for a longer period after they are hatched than, perhaps, any other of the feathered tribe. In the mean time, the droppings of the young, which the old birds of some species carefully convey away, are allowed to remain in the nest of the ring-dove. They soon form a kind of plaster, strong and scentless. This adds consistency to the nest, producing, at the same time, a defence against the cold."

"I know of no British bird," continues the same author, "which has the colour of its plumage so constant as is that of the ring-dove. I have never yet seen it vary; and the white spot, or segment of a circle, on the back of its neck, from which it takes its name, is always of the same size. Ring-doves are exceedingly numerous here* during summer; and when winter sets in, many thousands come every evening to take up their quarters for the night.

[* At Walton Hall.]

They retire early to roost, and never leave the trees till all the other birds are on the stir. As yet, all attempts to reclaim this pigeon have been of no avail. I should suppose that it is not in the power of man to make it breed within the walls of a dove-cot. For my own part, I am not exactly aware that its reduction to domestication would be productive of much advantage to us. Let others offer it the same protection it enjoys with me, and there would always be an ample supply of ring-doves to fill their groves with softest murmurs, and furnish their tables with a delicious repast."

From these observations of so close an observer of Nature as Mr. Waterton, it will be easy to understand that the ring-dove cannot easily be tamed, and that, when it is kept in confinement, it must be always in a cage. It may, however, be rendered so far tame as to become very affectionate to those who feed it. Its favourite nourishment consists of wheat, myrtle-berries, and the seeds of pines and firs, to which may be added, on the authority of the passage, which we have already quoted, turnip-tops or some other kind of green food, and a few peas. It very seldom lives longer than two or three years in confinement.

"The common Dovecot Pigeon," says Mr. Waterton, "is only a half-reclaimed bird, not being suf-

ficiently domesticated to be deemed private property, in the strictest sense of the word. Thus, I may raise any quantity of these pigeons; but, if they should forsake my dovecot, and retire to that of my neighbour, I cannot claim them. However, in order that dovecot pigeons may not fall into the hands of those who contribute nothing to their support, the legislature has enacted a fine of forty shillings, to be paid by him who has been convicted of having shot a dovecot pigeon." "No farm-yard," he continues, "can be considered complete without a well-stocked dovecot, the contents of which make the owner a most ample return, and repay him abundantly for the depredations which the pigeons are wont to make upon his ripening corn. Moreover, the pigeons render him an essential service, by consuming millions of seeds which fall in the autumn, and which, if allowed to remain on the ground, would rise up the following year, in all the rank exuberance of weed, and choke the wholesome plant. A dovecot should be well lighted; and it should be whitewashed once every year. No dovecot can possibly thrive if rats have found an entrance into it. These cruel and audacious plunderers will destroy every young pigeon within their reach. Oust them you must, and preclude their return, be the cost ever so great;

otherwise, disappointment will most assuredly be your lot."

"There is a peculiarity in the habits of the dovecot pigeon," Mr. Waterton adds, "which ought not to pass unnoticed. Though this bird will often perch on trees in the day-time, it has never been known to roost on them during the night. Neither will it pass the night in the open air, except in cases of the greatest emergency. I have an aged elm here,* of gigantic size, to which both the dovecot pigeon, and the wild ring-pigeon will frequently resort. It is amusing to watch the peculiar habits of these two different species of birds. They seem to come to the tree solely for their own convenience, and not with any intention to enjoy each other's company; and they appear to be as devoid of mutual signs of courtesy, as are our own countrymen when seated in a foreign diligence." "The dovecot pigeons, like the rest of the genus, are remarkable for retiring to their roost at an early hour, and for leaving it late in the morning: thus fulfilling only half of Poor Richard's maxim of

> 'Early to bed, and early to rise,
> Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.'

These pigeons never lay more than two eggs at one sitting. Indeed, I should be most surprised

* [At Walton Hall.]

were it satisfactorily proved that any pigeon ever sits on three eggs. Nothing can surpass the attachment of these birds to the cot of their choice. Provided you do not absolutely molest them by the repeated discharge of fire-arms, they can scarcely be driven from it. You may unroof their habitation; and, though you leave it in that dismantled state for weeks together, still the pigeons will not forsake it. At their early hour of roosting, they will approach within three or four yards of the workmen, and then take shelter in the holes of the roofless walls, where they remain for the night."

Pigeons are usually kept in what is called a dovecot, which is either a building or round tower constructed expressly for pigeons, or a wooden box, fixed on the top of a pole, or attached to a wall. In either case there must be holes or openings to admit the pigeons, each of which should be large enough to allow a pigeon to turn round in it with ease. Shelves and partitions, six or eight inches in depth, should also run along the front, to afford the pigeons a good resting place when they alight, and to keep each couple distinct. The shelves inside the dovecot should be fourteen inches or a little more in breadth. Partitions should be made in these shelves, about three feet apart, and a slip of board should be run along the edge of the shelves, about

four inches high, to keep in the nests. This slip should run in a groove, or be contrived in some other manner, so that it may be easily taken out when the nests are to be cleaned. Some tame pigeons will not give themselves the trouble to make nests; and for these, straw baskets with a little hay may be provided. Gravel should be strewed on the shelves and floor of the dovecot, as the birds are very fond of pecking it. It is also considered well to put a lump of salt, or a lump of earth on which a strong solution of salt and water has been poured, within reach of the pigeons, as it is said to be advantageous for their health.

With regard to the food of pigeons, it is said in the *Boy's Own Book*, that "of all grain old tares prove to be the best suited to the nature of these birds; new tares should be given very sparingly, especially to young pigeons, as they are very liable to do them much injury. Horse-beans are esteemed the next best food to tares; the smallest of these are preferred, especially small ticks. Wheat, barley, oats, and peas, ought only to be given now and then for a change of diet, as they sometimes hurt them. Rape, canary, and hemp seed, pigeons are immoderately fond of; but these must not by any means be made a constant diet."

Pigeons are subject to several diseases, the follow-

ing account of which, with their remedies, is extracted from the *Boy's Own Book*. "For the wet roup, give them three or four pepper-corns once in three or four days, and steep a handful of green rue in their water, which you may let all the pigeons drink of. The dry roup is known by a dry husky cough; it proceeds from a cold. To cure it, give them three or four cloves of garlic every day. The canker arises from the cocks pecking each other: for this, rub the affected part every day with burnt alum and honey. When the flesh round the eyes of the carrier, horseman, or barb, is torn or pecked, bathe it with salt water for several days; if this do not prove successful, wash the aggrieved part with two drachms of alum dissolved in an ounce and a half of water. When pigeons are infested with insects, smoke their feathers well with tobacco. Pouters and croppers are apt to gorge themselves when they have fasted rather longer than usual. When this happens, put the bird into a tight stocking with its feet downward, smoothing up the crop, that the overloaded bag of meat may not hang down; then hitch up the stocking on a nail, and keep it in this posture, supplying it with a little water now and then, till the food is digested. When taken out of the stocking, put the bird in an open coop or basket, and feed it but very moderately for

some time. The megrims is a disease in which the pigeon flutters about at random, with its head reverted so that its beak rests upon its back. This malady is pronounced incurable. When pigeons do not moult freely, put them into some warm place, and mix a good quantity of hemp seed in their common food, and a little saffron in their water. If they be lame, or the balls of their feet become swelled, either from the cold, being cut with glass, or any other accident, spread some Venice turpentine on a piece of brown paper, and put it to the part affected."

The STOCK-DOVE is generally supposed to be the origin of the domestic pigeon; but no instance is upon record of any person having succeeded in taming the stock-dove, and when kept with the common pigeon, it always appears, as Mr. Waterton has observed of the ring-dove, to treat its companion as a stranger rather than as one of its own kind.

There are many kinds of fancy pigeons, more than forty different varieties being described in some of the works on the subject. The most interesting, however, are the following: the TUMBLER, which derives its name from its habit of turning over and over again in the air when it is flying. When a number of these pigeons are kept together, and permitted to fly at the same time, the effect is very

curious, as they keep tumbling over and over close together; and when the sun shines they have a very singular appearance. Those that are considered good birds will continue on the wing four or five hours at a time. There are many kinds of tumblers, one of which has a bald head, and others have black or blue beards.

The CARRIER PIGEON is not remarkable for its beauty, but for its use; and in the olden times, before electric telegraphs were invented, carrier pigeons were kept to give early information of news of various kinds, as the carrier-pigeon when let loose will always fly back to the place where it was bred. The carrier-pigeon is elegant in its shape, but it is not beautiful in other respects, as it has a naked white fungus lump of flesh extending from the lower part of the head to the middle of the upper beak. This protuberance is called the wattle, and when it is black, which it is in some birds, it is rather ornamental than otherwise; but it is very much to the contrary when it is white. The bird has also a small wattle round the eye. The Horseman pigeon is a variety of the carrier, with larger wattles round the eyes, and smaller wattles on the beak. The Dragoon is another variety with still smaller wattles, and it is said to fly faster than either of the other two.

The POUTER PIGEON has the extraordinary property of filling its crop with wind so as to make it of an enormous size, as when the crop is fully inflated, the head appears so small as to be scarcely visible. These pigeons are frequently beautifully marked; they are very curious; and the best kinds of them are very dear.

The TRUMPETER is a curious kind of pigeon which is very seldom met with; and it takes its name from the manner in which it imitates the sound of a trumpet, which it does in the early part of the spring, particularly if it is fed at that season on hemp seed.

The NUN is so called from its head being almost covered with a veil of white feathers.

The FAN-TAIL is a remarkably pretty pigeon. It is generally white, with black feet; and, as it is very handsome, easily tamed, and tolerably hardy, it is one of the most common of all the fancy pigeons.

The JACOBINE is a very curious pigeon, with a range of inverted feathers on the back of its head, like the cap or cowl of a monk. There are several kinds of these birds, some of which have the legs and feet covered with feathers; others have the cowl only round the head, and these are called Capuchines. They are larger than the true jacobines, and are generally sold at a lower price.

The TURBIT PIGEON is nearly as small as the jacobine, but instead of having a cowl of feathers round its head, it has only a tuft of feathers on the breast, which opens and spreads both ways like the frill of a shirt. These birds are very handsome, and generally fly well.

There are several other kinds of pigeons, such as the Barb, the Mawmet, and the Spot; but the kinds that have been enumerated, are those most generally to be met with.

These varieties all require the same treatment as the common dove-cot pigeon; and they are all subject to the same diseases. Some of the kinds are, however, more tender than others, and require to be kept warm during severe weather.

CHAPTER XII.

GOLD AND SILVER FISH.

These fishes are a kind of carp. They were introduced originally from China, about the year 1691; but being soon lost, they were not reintroduced till about 1728. It was long supposed that they would not breed in this country; and as those kept in England were sent over every year from Portugal, where they breed freely, they long kept up a high price. It is now, however, found that they breed in ponds in this country if a few faggots are thrown in, so as to afford a sheltered place for them to deposit their spawn. Gold fish are rather tender, and generally thrive best when they are kept warm; but an instance is on record of a gold fish kept in a glass globe having been actually frozen in the water, and yet reviving after the water had thawed gradually. As the opposite extreme, they will thrive in water heated to 80°.

Gold fish are generally kept in glass globes; but, though they look very pretty in glasses of this kind,

it is, perhaps, the worst way of keeping them, as far as their health is concerned, that can be devised. The fish, to preserve them in a healthy state, require a frequent change of water, and plenty of air, with the opportunity of having shade when they require it. In a glass globe, they are constantly exposed to the light; they have very little air; the water cannot be changed without taking them out, by which they are always in danger of being hurt; and they have very little space for exercise. In fact, it may be observed, that when gold fish are taken out of a pond and put into a glass globe, they begin very soon to seem dull, and to lose their brilliant colours; soon after, generally one or two of them become diseased, and in a very short time, if the fish are not attended to, the greater part of them will be dead.

The best way of keeping gold fish is to have them in a vase or tank where a water plant is growing, so that they can take shelter occasionally under the leaves; and if there is a contrivance for changing the water by letting it off slowly on one side, and supplying the fresh water as slowly on the other, the fish may be kept in perfect health.

A friend of mine had a very ingenious contrivance of this kind, having what might be called a glass tank fixed in one of his windows for gold fish.

It consisted of a slender frame-work of wood, with a glass bottom and sides; and a very slender water-pipe, with a tap at the end of it, was laid on at one side, and a waste-pipe, also furnished with a tap, at the lowest corner of the opposite end. By turning these taps half round, a constant but very gentle current of water was produced. If this apparatus should be found inconvenient, a fountain may be placed in the centre of the tank, which will suffice; for in most cases, gold fish may be kept in perfect health in the basin of a fountain, as the constant movement of the water supplies them with air.

When fish are kept in a globe, it should be only about three-fourths filled with water, and it should have a wide mouth, so that the fish may be well supplied with air. The fish should be taken out every morning with the hand, as they are frightened at a net, and knock off their scales by flapping about; and not more than two, or three at most, should be kept in one globe. It must never be forgotten that to keep fish in health, they must have abundance of air, and plenty of room to swim about. The globe should be kept in an open airy part of the room, and never near the fire-place. It is said that gold fish are very apt to be killed during thunder-storms; and, therefore, it is best on such

occasions to remove the globe from the window, and to change the water as soon after the storm is over as possible.

Gold fish are subject to several diseases. Sometimes one of the fish will appear swimming sideways, and bending its body as though it were broken. When this is perceived, it should be taken out of the globe, and put in a shallow vessel, into which water is allowed to drop very gently for a space of time varying from twelve to twenty hours; at the expiration of which period the fish will be generally quite restored, or if not, it will be dead. This appears to be a disease of the air bladder, from the fish not having a sufficient supply of air. Another very singular disease with which gold fish are affected, shows itself by the growth of a fungus all over the body of the fish. When the fish is first attacked, it appears to have a sort of mealy substance all over it; and if this be suffered to increase, the fish generally dies in two or three days. Various remedies are recommended for this extraordinary disease, but it does not appear that any of them are always efficacious. One plan is to put a pinch of salt on the body of the diseased fish; and, if the disease has not spread very far, the remedy frequently produces the desired effect. As this disease appears to be infectious, the fish should be removed from its

companions as soon as it is attacked. There is great doubt whether the fungus is the cause or the effect of this singular disease; but there appears no doubt that the complaint is infectious, and that the fishes, as soon as they are attacked by it, should be removed from their companions.

Gold fish require very little feeding; and, in fact, when their water is changed frequently, and they have plenty of air, they require none at all. When they are kept in a glass globe, however, they may have a few bread crumbs, or a little biscuit broken very small, once a day; but the bread should never be left in the water, as, if it is, it is very apt to turn sour, and then it will become positively injurious. Foreign vermicelli, cut very small, is, however, generally preferred to any other farinaceous substance.

In a work published by M. De Sauvigny in Paris, in 1780, there are coloured representations of eighty-nine varieties of this fish. Some of them have double or treble tails, and others are without any back fin.

"When gold fish breed in ponds or tanks under favourable circumstances," observes Mr. Yarrell, "the young attain the length of five inches in the first twelve months, but their growth afterwards is much

less rapid. I have not seen any specimen that exceeded ten inches in length. The young are dark-coloured at first, almost black, changing more or less rapidly according to constitutional power."

Gold fish are said to be capable of attachment, and Mr. Jesse mentions that in some cases they appear "to entertain an affection for each other. A person who kept two together in a glass, gave one of them away; the other refused to eat, and showed evident symptoms of unhappiness till his companion was restored to him." I had a gold fish myself that would come to me and bite my finger, though if any one else put a finger into the glass, it would swim away.

Pennant says that "in China the most beautiful kinds are taken in a small lake in the province of Che-Kyang. Every person of fashion keeps them for amusement, either in porcelain vessels, or in the small basins that decorate the courts of the Chinese houses. The beauty of their colours, and their lively motions, give great entertainment, especially to the ladies, whose pleasures, from the policy of that country, are extremely limited." The Chinese call their fish with a whistle to receive their food.

CONCLUSION.

I cannot finish this little work without earnestly recommending the young people who may read it, to bestow unwearied kindness and attention upon their Domestic Pets. They should never forget that the poor animals which they keep in confinement for *their* pleasure, are deprived, by that confinement, of all power of helping themselves, and that they are entirely dependent upon those who keep them, not only for their comfort, but for their very existence. A single day's neglect, may be sufficient to kill a bird, or any other tender creature; and nothing can be more melancholy than the idea of a poor little bird pecking its empty trough, and searching for food and water which it cannot obtain; while, on the contrary, it is delightful to hear its joyous songs, and to see it trying, by every means in its power, to caress the hand that feeds it.

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